



by www.facebook.com with HTTP (ZuckMail);

Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 14:50:24 -0800

To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

From: Facebook <notification+floefg61@facebookmail.com>

Reply-To: noreply <noreply@facebookmail.com>

Subject: [REDACTED] tagged you on Facebook

X-Facebook-Notify: mention; from=[REDACTED]; mailid=[REDACTED]

X-FACEBOOK-PRIORITY: 0

facebook

Hi Stephen,

[REDACTED] tagged you in a post.

[REDACTED] wrote: "From the masterful [Stephen Bloom](#), a former (and favorite) professor of mine who teaches journalism at the University of Iowa:

"The corn grows so fast in Iowa -- from seedlings to 7-foot-high stalks in 12 weeks -- that it crackles nonstop throughout the summer months. The sound is like popcorn popping slow-motion in a microwave. That pop-pop-popping can be heard especially in the early morning hours, as dew and fog cover the acres of gently swaying cornstalks that surround farming villages the way the sea encircles an island. Rows upon rows stretch further than most urban minds can fathom, leathery husks and silky tassels bending in unison to the shimmying breeze. From one angle the corn resembles a hodgepodge of gnarly green stalks, but from another, each plant appears positioned with precision next to another, next to another, an exacting maze, for thousands upon thousands of acres.""

[See the post](#)

Learn more about [tagging on Facebook](#).

You can now tag your friends in your status or post. Type @ and then type the friend's name. For example: "Had lunch with @John Smith."

Thanks,
The Facebook Team

[See Post](#)

This message was sent to stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu. If you don't want to receive these emails from Facebook in the future, please click: [unsubscribe](#).

Facebook, Inc. Attention: Department 415 P.O Box 10005 Palo Alto CA 94303

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

X-Facebook: [REDACTED]
by www.facebook.com with HTTP (ZuckMail);
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 15:44:30 -0800
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
From: Facebook <notification+floefg61@facebookmail.com>
Reply-To: noreply <noreply@facebookmail.com>
Subject: [REDACTED] tagged you on Facebook
X-Facebook-Notify: mention; from=[REDACTED]; mailid=[REDACTED]
X-FACEBOOK-PRIORITY: 0

facebook

Hi Stephen,

[REDACTED] tagged you in a post.

[REDACTED] wrote: "My former professor, [Stephen Bloom](#), has this great piece about Iowa life, the state where I went to school, in the Atlantic this month.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/>"

[See the post](#)

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The Facebook Team

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--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

X-Facebook: from zuckmail [REDACTED]
by www.facebook.com with HTTP (ZuckMail);
Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 12:43:05 -0800
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
From: Facebook <notification+floefg61@facebookmail.com>
Reply-To: noreply <noreply@facebookmail.com>
Subject: [REDACTED] tagged you on Facebook
X-Facebook-Notify: mention; from=[REDACTED]; mailid=[REDACTED]
X-FACEBOOK-PRIORITY: 0

facebook

Hi Stephen,

[REDACTED] tagged you in a post.

[REDACTED] wrote: "[Stephen Bloom](#) will shatter your illusions about Iowa's political landscape and the upcoming caucus. Check out his article in The Atlantic."

[See the post](#)

Learn more about [tagging on Facebook](#).

You can now tag your friends in your status or post. Type @ and then type the friend's name. For example: "Had lunch with @John Smith."

Thanks,
The Facebook Team

[See Post](#)

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Facebook, Inc. Attention: Department 415 P.O Box 10005 Palo Alto CA 94303

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

X-Facebook: from zuckmail [REDACTED]
by www.facebook.com with HTTP (ZuckMail);
Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 13:58:15 -0800
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
From: Facebook <notification+floefg61@facebookmail.com>
Reply-To: noreply <noreply@facebookmail.com>
Subject: [REDACTED] tagged you on Facebook
X-Facebook-Notify: mention; from=[REDACTED]; mailid=[REDACTED]
X-FACEBOOK-PRIORITY: 0

facebook

Hi Stephen,

[REDACTED] tagged you in a post.

[REDACTED] wrote: "A former professor of mine, [Stephen Bloom](#), wrote this piece about his observations of Iowa -- casseroles, supper, church, hunting dogs-- all of it. <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-rural-iowa-life/249401/1/> It's a long story, but worth the read.... "
[See the post](#)

Learn more about [tagging on Facebook](#).

You can now tag your friends in your status or post. Type @ and then type the friend's name. For example: "Had lunch with @John Smith."

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The Facebook Team

[See Post](#)

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Facebook, Inc. Attention: Department 415 P.O Box 10005 Palo Alto CA 94303

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

X-Facebook: from zuckmail ([REDACTED])
by www.facebook.com with HTTP (ZuckMail);
Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 15:34:41 -0800
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
From: Facebook <notification+floefg61@facebookmail.com>
Reply-To: noreply <noreply@facebookmail.com>
Subject: [REDACTED] tagged you on Facebook
X-Facebook-Notify: mention; from=[REDACTED]; mailid=[REDACTED]
X-FACEBOOK-PRIORITY: 0

facebook

Hi Stephen,

[REDACTED] tagged you in a post.

[REDACTED] wrote: "OK. I lied. One more link to post tonight. This is my friend [Stephen Bloom](#)'s take on Iowa, designed to help folks outside the state understand the inner workings of a place that could help shape the 2012 presidential race. I liked it quite a bit - but Steve's getting a lot of flak from Iowans in the comment section. (Thank goodness, he's in Ann Arbor now.) Of course, I'm wondering what my Iowa FB friends think of itŠ"

[See the post](#)

Learn more about [tagging on Facebook](#).

You can now tag your friends in your status or post. Type @ and then type the friend's name. For example: "Had lunch with @John Smith."

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The Facebook Team

[See Post](#)

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--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

X-Facebook: from zuckmail [REDACTED]
by www.facebook.com with HTTP (ZuckMail);
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 10:00:51 -0800
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
From: Facebook <notification+floefg61@facebookmail.com>
Reply-To: noreply <noreply@facebookmail.com>
Subject: [REDACTED] tagged you on Facebook
X-Facebook-Notify: mention; from=[REDACTED]; mailid=[REDACTED]
X-FACEBOOK-PRIORITY: 0

facebook

Hi Stephen,

[REDACTED] tagged you in a post.

[REDACTED] wrote: "Iowans are noticing [Stephen Bloom](#)'s recent Atlantic article. My hometown mayor doesn't exactly acquit himself well with his response. Note: "God-dang it" isn't the word you want to use when trying to convince people you're not a backwoods hick."

[See the post](#)

Learn more about [tagging on Facebook](#).

You can now tag your friends in your status or post. Type @ and then type the friend's name. For example: "Had lunch with @John Smith."

Thanks,
The Facebook Team

[See Post](#)

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Facebook, Inc. Attention: Department 415 P.O Box 10005 Palo Alto CA 94303

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

X-Facebook: from zuckmail ([REDACTED])
by www.facebook.com with HTTP (ZuckMail);
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 20:51:02 -0800
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
From: Facebook <notification+floefg61@facebookmail.com>
Reply-To: noreply <noreply@facebookmail.com>
Subject: [REDACTED] tagged you on Facebook
X-Facebook-Notify: mention; from=[REDACTED] mailid=[REDACTED]
X-FACEBOOK-PRIORITY: 0

facebook

Hi Stephen,

[REDACTED] tagged you in a post.

[REDACTED] wrote: "From [Stephen Bloom](#) of the University of Iowa, very enlightening article about the Iowa Caucasus. Getting a lot of attention right now. "

[See the post](#)

Learn more about [tagging on Facebook](#).

You can now tag your friends in your status or post. Type @ and then type the friend's name. For example: "Had lunch with @John Smith."

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The Facebook Team

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--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]
> [REDACTED]
>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>Subject: :)

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 20:41:33 -0600

>

>'This is as an article written by an individual who perceives himself
>to be 'elite.' It is a dishonest piece of journalism which is his own
>projection of reality. Academics should always be cautious of their
>tendency to aggrandize themselves.

>

>So sad.

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

E

Age Group	Percentage
18-29	85%
30-49	75%
50-69	65%
70+	55%

stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>I would just like to say how terribly disappointed I was when I read
>your article about your observations on lowans after 20 years. Iowa is
>not much but it's where I call home. I too am an Iowa transplant,
>though I am a Mid-Westerner born and raised (Nebraska->Virginia->Iowa.
>I am proud to say that I live in Iowa and I think we represent what is
>still good about our Nation. Iowa is not fancy, you are right about
>that, but we are not all a bunch of hicks and hillbillies like you made
>us out to be.

 \succ

>We have one of the best education systems in the country and we have
>some of the best colleges in the nation where they promote love and
>acceptance. Where we learn about science and evolution, as well as
>religion in open classrooms that encourage discussion. I went to high
>school in a town of 10,000 very religious people and never felt
>anything less than accepted and welcomed, even as an open atheist.
> At my small college in the same religious town, both religion and
>science classes were required for every student. Professors encouraged
>us to both listen to others points of view and express our own without
>fear of judgement.

>

>I now live in Des Moines and am still in love with my state. I have
>3 degrees (1 BA, 1 MS, and 1 PhD) and am going to stay in Iowa (with
>many of my Iowa born classmates) and make our communities better.
> Rural Iowa is a unique place, that much is true, but I have never met
>more honest, hardworking, and helpful people anywhere else that I have
>been. They may recognize someone from out of town, but that would not
>stop them from helping that same person in anyway they can. I have
>seen this first hand countless times... a person with a flat tire or a
>family stuck due to bad weather taken care of by a small community of
>people that look out for each other and anyone else in need.

 \succ

>I lived on the east coast for 5 years before moving to Iowa. In a town
>of 504,000 people. And I hated every part of it. I would take my
>clean air, and low crime, and helping, loving communities anyday over
>the cold, harsh coast. My parents were terrified of the world around
>us when we lived on the coast. The extremely high crime rates,
>extremely high levels of air and water pollution, and terrible
>education systems were enough to make every parent cringe.
> I was sent to a guidance counselor 2 times for saying that I didnt
>believe in God, not once did that happen in Iowa.

>

>So please! Dont judge us to harshly. Iowa is a great place full of
>great people. I wish you would open your eyes and see that. Its not
>perfect but it's home for thousands of good, smart, caring people. I
>dont think you ever even gave us a chance, and that truely is your

>loss.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 20:06:11 -0800

Subject: a nice read

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Dear Mr. Bloom,

I found my way to your essay in The Atlantic today, through a friend on Facebook who was not pleased with your observations. We went to high school together in [REDACTED] Illinois and she went on to do her undergraduate studies at University of Iowa. She's now in Texas and fuming.

I spent a good hour reading and rereading the essay. I could not figure out what she was so angry about. I read through the comments. I could not figure out what anyone was so angry about. I guess Iowans interpret observations (good ones, I might add) as criticisms, when they clearly aren't. In fact, I saw a lot of fondness for the state in your piece.

[REDACTED] is not too far from the Iowa border, and as my father was a Ryder truck dealer I spent many hours on that road to Keokuk, driving trucks. I haven't been to Keokuk in years, but I imagine it hasn't changed much. I recognized a lot of the details in your piece as being true of where I grew up. I can't think of a single house I went to where we ever used the front door. In fact, the front door to our house, until only recently--for insurance purposes--, did not have steps up to it; the door perched very uselessly about three feet up from the ground. My favorite meal for most of my life was a casserole where the ingredients, in total, were 4 different cans of food. Stir and bake. My grandfather drove his riding lawnmower around town. My family lived in the country, where every summer you got stuck behind tractors. Once, my mother almost had a head on collision with a cow who had escaped the fence. Another time, we drove our 4-wheelers to herd our neighbors cattle off our yard. I remember very clearly ramming into those giant beasts. My parents must not have been worried we would accidentally be trampled.

I commented on my friend's FB link to your article, under all the Iowans' (or temporary ones, who have since moved on) who had posted angry comments. I asked, "Read more carefully. Aren't you seeing his point? How many of us have fled these small towns where we grew up?" No one has responded.

Anyway, this is all just to say that I thoroughly enjoyed your essay and found the details beautiful in their truth. My only point of contention--I think of the corn as *rustling* in those late summer months. :)

Thank you for writing.

Yours very sincerely,

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 18:41:03 -0800

Subject: About the Iowa article.

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Greetings Stephen,

My name is [REDACTED], a native Iowa, Korean American, and I currently live in San Francisco. I lived in Iowa for 19 years. And now I've lived in San Francisco for __ amount of years. Right now my twitter and facebook, in an uproar about your article.

I really enjoyed it. I felt like it was a completely accurate depiction from someone in your situation. I know other people like you, who just can't for the life of them, get passed all of the zany Iowan nuances. Even though you may have only been addressed about your dog a handful of times, it feels like a hundred.

I'll come out and admit that most of what you said was true. But I feel you attacked many people indirectly. This is because you are Bay Area.

Your article really sealed the whole deal on my idea of Bay Area folk. People who don't usually leave here, and are forever scorned with a close minded personality. Not that closed minded is bad, but just closed off, from other culture. Like the midwest.

It's okay though, I know in your Bay Area condition, especially for someone your age, that things like Iowa, seem like they're from a TV show.

Just like Bay Area folk, Iowan's are proud of what they grow up in. Proud like Missionites who have moved up from the old gang days. Proud like people in the Castro, for turning it into the neighborhood that it is today. Proud like EVERYBODY in Oakland, for just making it.

I agree with everything you wrote in your article. However you did piss on a proud state of good people.

Enjoy the backlash.

Best,

■

■

■

■

■

■

■

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Add this to the list of things you were wrong about
Thread-Topic: Add this to the list of things you were wrong about
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:52:51 +0000
Accept-Language: en-US
x-cr-puzzleid: [REDACTED]
x-cr-hashedpuzzle: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

x-originating-ip: [REDACTED]

<http://thegazette.com/2011/12/14/heres-the-gazettes-easter-sunday-front-page-in-1994/>

[REDACTED]

Proud to be an Iowan

DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
d=gmail.com; s=gamma;
h=mime-version:from:date:message-id:subject:to:content-type;
bh=Aa9wTddOMs/lpgr7Mh4cqW4U59F4CYt73FY1ZAZO2Nc=;
b=k1LwIj4HpICTSmaE9Xc2N5NgB2vFxoWPKI0TQBliWBLmr4h3xkOoAHrK582XInu8vU
tHfbqINkowDnrHANogI3nzbZS1zUmMXmczG0xd4YVrsmPaPDMGhX8MQXR8HJvybl/nyE
twW6AT5sKRv3X/CKMLIQbl6twAMi+6ncEa0BY=
From: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 14:13:13 -0500
Subject: alternate address
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

--

<http://twitter.com/thegarance>

[REDACTED]

From: Katherine Perkins <kperkins@iowapublicradio.org>

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 11:18:03 -0500

Subject: Another idea for interview with IPR

Thread-Topic: Another idea for interview with IPR

Thread-Index: Acy5ssn/spoIH7bwT7G2BZyK0GT/qQ==

Accept-Language: en-US

acceptlanguage: en-US

Stephen -

Would you be willing to do the interview if all listener feedback came from social media? Facebook, Twitter and email. Then we would have the chance to see the comments and forward on the valid, rational arguments without all the emotion?

Katherine Perkins | Producer | Iowa Public Radio

710 S. Clinton St. | Iowa City, IA 52242

T 319.384.0908 | M 515.291.1763 | kperkins@iowapublicradio.org

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED]
>To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Article Response
>Thread-Topic: Article Response
>Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 19:42:44 -0600
>Accept-Language: en-US

>
>Mr.Bloom,

>
>I read your article from The Atlantic today and found it offensive and
>conceited. I have lived with my family in Dubuque, Iowa since I was six
>years old and am now a student at the University of Iowa. I am not
>religious, I am liberal, I have never lived on a farm, I do not know
>many people who live on a farm, and I love the Mississippi River. Your
>stereotypes are incorrect and rude. If this is the way you feel about
>Iowa, I don't understand why you don't leave permanently.

>
>Your article comments on things that you consider wrong with the state.
>I think it is your opinions that are wrong in this situation.
>After reading students' comments about you as a professor, I am in
>consensus with the others who say you are full of yourself.

>
>I have sent the article to friends and family. I doubt that many
>students will be interested in taking classes from you in the future at
>the University of Iowa. Hopefully this leads to you leaving because you
>are no asset to this university.

>
>I am smart and I attribute my success to the place I was raised. I am
>going to go far because of the hard work ethic I have developed due to
>growing up in the midwest and it is likely I will raise my family in
>Iowa and continue to flourish.

>
>I hope the backlash against your article causes you to think about why
>you are at the University of Iowa. You do not represent this university
>so it would be best if you went back to wherever you came from that is
>so much better than Iowa.

>
>Merry Christmas,

> [REDACTED]

--
Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 22:34:57 -0600

>Subject: article

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Stephen,

>

>Whatever you make, you are overpaid. As an alumnus of U of I and

>taxpayer of the state of Iowa, I am embarrassed to pay your salary.

>

>Please do not write another article ever again.

>

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>X-rim-org-msg-ref-id: [REDACTED]

>Reply-To: [REDACTED]

>Sensitivity: Normal

>Subject: Article

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>CC: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 05:09:30 +0000

>

>Professor Bloom -

>

>At one point we all got pummeled in high school. A man would eventually
>get over the fact.

>

>I realize being the victim of adolescent violence is a tough subject to
>digest. Running away to the midwest is not the answer.

>

>Iowans are not responsible for your petty youth, let alone you're blame game.

>

>Sincerely

>

> [REDACTED]

>Iowa City, IA

>-----

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]
From: [REDACTED]
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Article
Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 05:30:32 -0600

Sir, are you serious?? It is incredible that a "professor" would write so many false, god hating, pompous, arrogant, and self-serving opinions in an article for all to see while representing the University of Iowa. You best check your facts a little more.

We have another saying here in Iowa you forgot to mention: "If you don't like it then don't let the door hit you where the good Lord split you!" Merry Christmas!

FYI: 'Happy Holidays' was actually derived from 'happy holy days', so thank you....I will.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]
>From: [REDACTED]
>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Article
>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 16:36:09 -0600

>
>Seriously? How ignorant are you?? Born & raised in Iowa- college
>education. Never been to a tractor pull, never had a mud room on any
>home that we have owned, don't pronounce vehicle like a hick, was never
>considered "hardy" like our parade queens, never shopped at Wal-Mart
>for clothes, no one in my family uses or has used Old Spice.... The
>thought that someone actually yelled out their window that your dog
>would be a good hunting bitch makes me realize how fabricated this
>article truly is..... I could go on forever at your complete
>misrepresentation of Iowa but what's the point. After living in Iowa
>after 20 years you obviously have no clue. The only good thing that I
>read in your article is how Iowa's education system remains strong-
>however after reading your dribble and knowing that you are an educator
>yourself, it's truly hard to believe. The silver lining??? I did read
>a post that you are now in Michigan- if that is correct, good riddance.
>Go be miserable there.

>
>[REDACTED]
>
>PS- MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!!

>
>
>

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 08:36:13 -0600

>Subject: Article

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>CC: [REDACTED]

>

>Attention Steve:

>

>The amount of criticism you have managed to draw both from very liberal
>and very conservative lowans is remarkable. I now believe you may have
>actually succeeded in convincing yourself that your subjective negative
>perceptions of Iowa were somehow.... how did you put it.... raising
>truths? Wow, it must be confusing in that head of yours. Yes, I just
>attacked you personally. Don't let that one boil under your skin for
>twenty years now. Let it go bud.

>You aren't raising truths Steve, you are spewing the opinion of one
>unhappy man. I don't need to enlighten you about where such a negative
>worldview comes from, right Steve? You do understand that calling every
>Iowa town on the Mississippi "skuzzy" is a reflection of your own
>insecurities, wrapped in a loaded term, packaged in a screed? But I
>don't need to tell you that right?

>Wait though, that can't be you. You lived for twenty years in a
>community, created roots, and became relatively successful. For someone
>to spend that much of his life in one place, only to reveal he has been
>seething with some twisted form of egocentric contemptment would lead
>any reasonable observer to conclude that individual is masochistic, or
>unaware of his self-loathing. That can't be you, right? RIGHT?!
>Feel welcome to stay in Ann Arbor. I, for one, don't want to pay
>another Iowa tax dollar for your garbage.

> [REDACTED] J.D.

>

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: article
Thread-Topic: article
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:53:06 +0000
Accept-Language: en-US
x-originating-ip: [REDACTED]

Mr. Bloom, I read most of your article in the Atlantic but not all as I don't suffer stupidity very well. I guess I can understand that you were groveling and pandering to the East Coast elitists with your article, but that makes you an even less of a honest journalist. I have been aware that the U of I has been on the decline due to mediocre professors, but I didn't know it has reached the level of incompetency that you have shown. It is disappointing to see our students tuition and taxpayer dollars go to support the likes of you. I have traveled the country extensively over the years and I have not seen a better place to live and raise a family than Iowa with its many hard-working, honest and friendly people. I do feel sorry for you as it would appear you are in a severe state of depression for which you should seek counseling.

Good luck, you obviously need it. [REDACTED] Urbandale, IA

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:25:56 -0500
>To: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>
>From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Fwd: Article

>Cc:

>Bcc:

>X-Attachments:

>

>>X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]

>>From: [REDACTED]

>>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>>Subject: Article

>>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 16:36:09 -0600

>>

>>Seriously? How ignorant are you?? Born & raised in Iowa- college
>>education. Never been to a tractor pull, never had a mud room on any
>>home that we have owned, don't pronounce vehicle like a hick, was
>>never considered "hardy" like our parade queens, never shopped at
>>Wal-Mart for clothes, no one in my family uses or has used Old
>>Spice.... The thought that someone actually yelled out their window
>>that your dog would be a good hunting bitch makes me realize how
>>fabricated this article truly is..... I could go on forever at your
>>complete misrepresentation of Iowa but what's the point.
>>After living in Iowa after 20 years you obviously have no clue.
>>The only good thing that I read in your article is how Iowa's
>>education system remains strong- however after reading your dribble
>>and knowing that you are an educator yourself, it's truly hard to
>>believe. The silver lining??? I did read a post that you are now in
>>Michigan- if that is correct, good riddance. Go be miserable there.

>>

>> [REDACTED]

>>

>>PS- MERRY CHRISTMAS!!!!

>>

>>

>>

[REDACTED]

>X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]
>From: [REDACTED]
>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Assignment
>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 22:44:24 -0600

>Stephen,

>
>
>
>How do you walk down the streets of Iowa City after writing your
>article? Many Iowans have lived here all their lives and are very happy
>with where they are at in life spiritually, socially, and financially.
>What were you exactly trying to prove with your article? This has
>spread like a wild fire through social media and other media outlets.
>The vast majority of your readers are Iowans and you definitely hit a
>hot button with them. I would assume you are smart enough to realize
>this would be an extremely controversial and poorly received article.
>If you were looking to write an article to catapult your career you
>definitely picked the right topic. You also threw the entire state (who
>pays your \$99,000 plus salary) under the bus. I foresee your career
>taking the same path as Chris Dodd and Barney Frank's after they
>co-wrote the Financial Reform Bill. They received so much criticism
>after writing the bill they decided to retire before 90% of their bill
>was even in place. Their reasoning was they did not have the energy to
>run another successful campaign. It was apparent they were tired of the
>constant criticism from the public. This is not going to be an easy
>road for you Mr.

>Bloom but I hope this road leads you straight out of Iowa and back to
>California. You have obviously worn out your welcome.

>Merry Christmas,

>

> [REDACTED]

>

>

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

>X_CMAE_Category: 0,0 Undefined,Undefined

>X-CNFS-Analysis: [REDACTED]

>X-CM-Score: 0

>Authentication-Results: [REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 20:54:04 -0500

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>Subject: Atlantic article

>X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]

>

>Mr Bloom,

>

> Read with interest the Des Moines Register article about your
>Atlantic piece. My wife and I are also from New Jersey and have been
>residents of southeast Iowa since 1986. I've made similar observations
>but wasn't about to be the one to stand up at Grandma's table and
>declare the turkey dry.

>We found it a pretty good place to raise three kids, teaching values
>and a work ethic and when the need for some culture arose, headed to
>the big city. Extra effort on the part of the parents as participants
>in character building activities paid big dividends. My wife has grown
>weary of my complaining about not fitting in and fretting about so many
>less fortunate around us. Having escorted senior classes to New York
>City and others on ski and kayak trips, we've found a niche where in a
>small way we're broadening some horizons.

> I don't know about you but I never wished I was back in Joisey!

>

>

> [REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

X-Yahoo: [REDACTED]
DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]
SMTP:Received:Message-ID From:To:Date:X-Mailer:MIME-Version Subject:X-Priority Content-Type|

X-Yahoo: [REDACTED]

X-Yahoo-SMTP: [REDACTED]
From: [REDACTED]
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 20:13:43 -0600
Subject: Atlantic article

Mr Bloom
You may have "traveled through" all of Iowas 99 counties, but it obvious you learned nothing during your trip
The next time you feel like writing about something you know nothing about, do everyone a favor and remove your head from your rectum first
Thank you


Connected by DROID on Verizon Wireless

--

Stephen G Bloom

Howard R Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa



>Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 15:34:55 -0500

>To: sgbloom@umich.edu

>From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>Subject: atlantic link

>Cc:

>Bcc:

>X-Attachments:

>

><http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-rural-iowa-life/249401/>

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED]

>Subject: Atlantic Monthly Article

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 19:39:22 -0600

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Professor Bloom,

>

>I think you made some serious overstatements and generalizations in

>your recent piece about Iowa that appeared in the "Atlantic Monthly."

>Iowa is a hardworking state, filled with many people who are, indeed,

>both religious and wary of "coastal" morals. This does not make us bad

>people, or stupid people, or people that you should frown upon. A true

>liberal would embrace such a state. After all, this "culturally

>backwards" state voted for Obama in 2008, right?

>

>I could harp on how your characterizations of Iowa as being filled with

>the unemployed (<http://www.bls.gov/news.release/laus.nr0.htm>)

>and the bigoted are erroneous at best and horrifically, abstractly

>wrong, at worst, but I think that, being a university professor on

>journalism, you probably already know that you made some misstatements.

>Aren't you supposed to be teaching your students to write and report

>without discernible, overbearing bias?

>

>It is this kind of discourse that is poisoning the current political

>climate; you are contrasting "Iowans" versus "them" (probably the

>high-class, crime-ridden, religiously agnostic cultural meccas you seem

>to adore that are, apparently, found only in California and New York).

>Next to nothing in your article was constructive or fairly written.

>

>Have a good day,

>

>[REDACTED]

>Northwestern University

>Weinberg College of Arts and Sciences

>

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

From: "Schettler, Emily" <eschettler@iowacity.gannett.com>
To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 13:27:11 -0700
Subject: Atlantic story
Thread-Topic: Atlantic story
Thread-Index: Acy5DG2q+oa74mnqQDerIUvirTeEPQ==
Accept-Language: en-US
acceptlanguage: en-US

Hi Prof. Bloom -

I was wondering if you might have time to talk about your story in the Atlantic? It seems to have gotten a lot of feedback, both locally and on the website, and I was wondering if I could ask you a few follow up questions about the piece.

Would you be free at all this afternoon or evening? I am available until about 4 p.m. and then any time after 5:30.

Thank you for your time,
Emily

Emily Schettler
Iowa City Press-Citizen
Reporter
123 N. Linn St., Suite 2E
Iowa City, IA 52241

319-887-5412 (o)
712-210-3280 (m)
eschettler@press-citizen.com
On Twitter: @eschettler

Visit the Press-Citizen online:
www.press-citizen.com
www.hawkcentral.com

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Subject: Atlantic

>From: [REDACTED]

>Date: Sun, 11 Dec 2011 23:50:54 -0600

>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Dear Stephen,

>I just read your Atlantic essay. I find us much as you describe us.

>But I'm also struck by the incongruity of this same demographic

>supporting the consummate "dark horse" candidate in 2008 as well as

>your not pointing out that incongruity in the essay. The simple folk

>you describe would have gone for Biden or one of the other tried and

>true options. As always, well written, but I think the text leaves a

>discrepancy highlighted but unresolved.

>

[REDACTED]

>

>Please excuse any typos. Sent from my phone. Big fingers, small keys.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
> d=gmail.com; s=gamma;
> h=date:from:to:message-id:subject:mime-version:content-type
> :content-transfer-encoding:content-disposition:precedence
> :x-autoreply;
> bh=k0Lj3E1YwDM4fUJJYsj2ZawLL0aaV1yC7qX0vWMB930=;
> b=K1yVphXOiYAw7cdMPIXcFK3CjXIVjFp9/afBp/YoxlVUdM2eQpD8uv2Urx+Xlem7QH
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> 9YfJaUtBh49Btl1Or4VSScu4nG9y/fQJnVbzw=
>Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 15:00:00 -0800
>From: Luis Argueta <luisarguetaa@gmail.com>
>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Away till December 15th Re: My take on Iowa
>X-Autoreply: yes
>
>I will be abroad with sporadic access to internet until December 15th.
>
>--
>Luis Argueta
>Director Producer
>Maya Media Corp.
>70 La Salle St. #14G
>New York, NY 10027
>luisarguetaa@gmail.com
>(NY) 646.418.3599*
>(*GUA) 502.4617.4740

DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; d=facebookmail.com; s=s1024-2011-q2; c=relaxed/simple;
q=dns/txt; i=@facebookmail.com; t=1323960312;
h=From:Subject:Date:To:MIME-Version:Content-Type;
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b=U+AYBaAAIwW6vdNdYVl5hB3p+n1V0lcdVgNjpKS1TWYDamZkl0rE+yaaJLjZMVug
qK30lDY3up9SFSCA0dzzK9lTmoBzwwYgkCnVY59sRMtBLwBoCsGdXVzTu8pg7GD
uZDrNPQyqj5U/K0zL2Be4uc7bj3PEpe3fSY/LWnjGFI=;
X-Facebook: from zuckmail ([MTI3LjAuMC4x])
by www.facebook.com with HTTP (ZuckMail);
Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 06:45:12 -0800
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
From: Facebook <notification+floefg61@facebookmail.com>
Reply-To: noreply <noreply@facebookmail.com>
Subject: Brian Morelli tagged you on Facebook
X-Facebook-Notify: mention; from=14817886; mailid=5540525Ge20025G8e1ff13G52
X-FACEBOOK-PRIORITY: 0

facebook

Hi Stephen,

Brian tagged you in a post.

Brian wrote: "As Caucus Day Approaches, A Debate Over Us Iowa Hicks. My look at [Stephen Bloom](#) piece in the Atlantic and Iowans response. <http://aol.it/tfutra>"

[See the post](#)

Learn more about [tagging on Facebook](#).

You can now tag your friends in your status or post. Type @ and then type the friend's name. For example: "Had lunch with @John Smith."

Thanks,
The Facebook Team

[See Post](#)

This message was sent to stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu. If you don't want to receive these emails from Facebook in the future, please click: [unsubscribe](#).

Facebook, Inc. Attention: Department 415 P.O Box 10005 Palo Alto CA 94303

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 14:35:39 -0600

>Subject: cav canum

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Stephen, looks like you ruffled some feathers out there. Well to Hell

>with them, you made one friend. For my ten years here you are right on.

>

>Anyway if you want to share " an adult beverage" Iowa slang over here

>in Ames, it's on me. My son is over there due to graduate this spring ,

>so Iowa City works well also.

>

>Sincerely, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 11:00:08 -0500
>From: David Scanlon <dscanlon@sbgnet.com>
>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: CBS 2 KGAN Story
>X-Originating-IP: [10.100.215.146]
>
>Hello,
>
>I'm working on a story about your recent column in the Atlantic. As I'm
>sure you know, there's been some reaction to the questions you raise
>and your observations. Was the timing of the article at significant?
>How do you feel about the response?
>
>If your available I'd like to meet to ask a few questions.
>
>Please let me know if you can help me with this.
>
>Thanks,
>
>David Scanlon
>Reporter/Photojournalist
>KGAN CBS 2/KFXA Fox 28
>319-213-4721

[REDACTED]

Date: Sun, 11 Dec 2011 21:44:44 -0500

To: [REDACTED]

From: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: checking in

Cc:

Bcc:

X-Attachments:

[REDACTED],

Great to get your email! See that you've moved to NYC for CNN. What are you doing? Would love to hear from you.....

If you have any connections any longer with [REDACTED] and the State of the Union people in D.C., perhaps you could pass this story onto them.....It's gone viral on the Internet, and I'm scheduled to appear as a guest on the Colbert Report Jan. 3, the day of the Iowa Caucuses!

Here it is:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/>

[REDACTED]

steve

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

>X-Yahoo-[REDACTED]
>X-Yahoo-[REDACTED]
>DKIM-Signature:[REDACTED]
>h=X-YMail-OSG:Received:X-Mailer:Message-ID:Date:From:Reply-To:Subject:T
>o:Cc:MIME-Version:Content-Type;

[REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 23:52:03 -0800
>From:[REDACTED]
>Reply-To:[REDACTED]
>Subject: chill dude
>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>CC:[REDACTED]

>
> I'm sure by now you've heard from hundreds of lowans telling you
>the proctologist called, they'd found your head. Boy, you couldn't be
>wronger. I've lived in a dozen places in my life outside of Iowa,
>including outside of the United States, but I've never lived anywhere
>the people could match the generosity of spirit, the enthusiasm, or the
>joie de vivre of lowans. Maybe you've not met those types of lowans
>because you're a boring old twat waffle. I live in Dubuque, one of the
>loveliest places on earth, with it's gorgeous limestone bluffs right
>along the "Big Muddy". If you ever want to eat some crow, please stop
>by, and stay for dinner, if you don't mind eating vegan, not actually
>crow. By the way, I had beautiful black lab, and he never brought a
>critter home for dinner, as guest, or entree. Last, but not least,
>CHILL DUDE. Throw some Matis on the stereo, shake yourself up an
>apple-tini, and CHILLAX.

>
>
>Yours in Christ(just kidding, I'm one of only two non-Christians in
>town)

>[REDACTED]
>
>Dubuque, Iowa (I'm in the book under [REDACTED])
>

--
Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
CC: [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 14:17:54 -0600
Subject: Clinging to Guns and Religion.....Iowa Life
Thread-Topic: Clinging to Guns and Religion.....Iowa Life
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
Accept-Language: en-US
acceptlanguage: en-US

Stephen,

I recently read your article in The Atlantic. It stirred up many conflicting feelings. Pride, shame, anger, hope, etc. I shared it with my wife and she felt the same way. That's your first piece I have read and plan to look at more.

I am [REDACTED] years old. I was born and raised in Cedar Rapids. My family consisted of farmers and city folk. I graduated from U. of Iowa in [REDACTED] and moved to Chicago. I am a successful banker. I belong to the nicest country club. My oldest son is graduating from [REDACTED] College in May and already has a great job lined up in Chicago. My second son is a sophomore at [REDACTED] College in their Media Studies program and loves it. Married 24 years to [REDACTED] whom I met in Iowa City and it was love at first sight.

I have a big extended family, but most of my family remains in Iowa. As you point out in your piece, some of the younger ones have moved to St. Louis, Minneapolis, LA, and Chicago. We are all well educated. Bankers, doctors, teachers, social workers, etc., but we love Iowa and have never stopped.

[REDACTED] years ago I bought an old house on the banks of the Mississippi in [REDACTED], IA. [REDACTED] This is our second home used for long weekends, family gatherings, and vacations. [REDACTED] is the antithesis of [REDACTED] Illinois, where I have lived the past 25 years. [REDACTED] is under 700 people, low income, high unemployment, sometimes violent, and [REDACTED]

Iowa and my love for the river brought me to [REDACTED]. Oddly and unexpectedly, I have found that I am happiest in life when I am in Iowa, and now [REDACTED]. It's the simplicity of life that has struck a chord with me, and the general honesty and happiness of the people that make me feel at peace and at home. There is little pretentiousness and false entitlement. Qualities that I think our country has lost. You are judged at face value for how you treat others, and not for what you have, or your position. Also unexpectedly, my three children whom I have raised in the affluent suburb of [REDACTED], also love their time in [REDACTED] and have made me promise to never get rid of our Iowa home. They have also grown to appreciate the value of a quiet, simple lifestyle, next to their hustling world of activities in [REDACTED] and Chicago. I have a feeling that many more of us, people like me, will wake up to the beauty of this Iowa lifestyle and it's rich people, and hopefully re-embrace it. I am grateful that I did.

I look forward to reading more of your works, and hope we can correspond.

If you ever want to drive 90 minutes to [REDACTED] some weekend, please let me know, because I will probably be there. I would love have a coffee at the one and only Restaurant, or a can of beer (\$1.50 at the VFW).

PS: My son, [REDACTED], just finished a short documentary about a neighbor in [REDACTED]. I think you will like it.

[REDACTED] - President

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Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 21:25:54 -0500

Subject: Comments

From: Franke-Ruta Garance <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Thread-Topic: Comments

Thread-Index: Acy60N7AIqQtmp5nUEu9t5xslLigvA==

Hi Stephen,

I have been going back through the comments. Most of them seem fine, if negative to highly-negative, which we permit, and I am not seeing any threats so far. Of course there are 800 of them. If you recall specific ones that made threats, could you point them out to me? I can remove them.

Thanks,
Garance

--

Garance Franke-Ruta
Senior Editor (Politics), The Atlantic
ph: (202)266-7079
ce: (202)904-5413
600 New Hampshire Ave. NW
Washington, DC 20037
gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com
<http://twitter.com/thegarance>

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/>

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

From: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Sent: Thursday, December 15, 2011 1:20 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Fwd: Correspondence
Attachments: Bloom.pdf

[REDACTED],
Forwarding emails I received from President Mason.

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

From: "Braun, Mark J" <mark-braun@uiowa.edu>
To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Correspondence
Thread-Topic: Correspondence
Thread-Index: Acy7XQp5+7JoPg4vQpOaEkMYicOOsQ==
Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 13:09:47 -0600
Accept-Language: en-US

Professor Bloom,

President Mason asked I share the attached correspondence.

Mark J. Braun
Chief of Staff
Office of the President
101 Jessup Hall
Iowa City, IA 52242-1316
319-335-3549 - voice
319-335-0807 - fax



Content-Type: image/gif; name="image001.gif"
Content-Description: image001.gif
Content-Disposition: inline; filename="image001.gif"; size=1699;
creation-date="Thu, 15 Dec 2011 13:09:47 GMT";
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creation-date="Thu, 15 Dec 2011 13:05:59 GMT";
modification-date="Thu, 15 Dec 2011 13:05:59 GMT"

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DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 13:50:54 -0600

Subject: Could your article have been more wrong?

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Mr. Bloom,

As a resident of Iowa for over 22 years, I'm appalled by your ethnocentrism and your lack of knowledge about Iowa as a whole. You took our simpler, more relaxed lifestyle and turned it into something to laugh at. I hate to break it to you sir, but you may have traveled to every county in Iowa and you may be a college professor, but you are clearly *not* bright if you think all us Iowans have to do on a Friday night is go to tractor pulls or combine contests. And (again, I've lived here for 22 years) I've never, **ever** seen a sign for boar semen. Also, I don't see the Quad Cities (my hometown area) as a crime infested, scuzzy area, sir. We have a rapidly growing population and people are continually coming here to find work at the Rock Island Arsenal or John Deere (did I mention that John Deere is a Fortune 500 company? It's not a bunch of farmers riding around on tractors. But even if it was, without farmers our country would be nothing), and they come here to live because it's got the big city feel without the high crime rates of bigger cities like Chicago. AND, the Mississippi is still heavily relied on. Do you know what happens to transportation of goods when the river freezes up? Barges that need to transport goods to the north and south of us are stalled up until the Mississippi unfreezes. I'd love to see how you'd propose transporting all the mass items that travel up and down the Mississippi without our "rusty-bucket barges".

My main point here, sir, is that if you think Iowa is so full of hicks who aren't worth much to the rest of the country, then just stay in Michigan and don't come back now, ya hear? While I have never personally held a gun in my life and probably never will, there are plenty of people in Iowa who own guns and are feeling mighty upset with your "observations". Next time, before you publish something about a state you clearly know nothing about, check the loyalty factor in that state. We may move around the country to find different job opportunities or to get diverse educations, but Iowans are Iowans for life. And we're proud of being die-hard Hawkeye or Cyclone fans, and there is nothing to be ashamed of in that. We love this state, but if you don't, then find another place to call home--we have plenty of people here who gladly claim this state as theirs.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

X-RC-FROM: <aaronb@ci.humboldt.ia.us>
X-RC-RCPT: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
From: Aaron Burnett <aaronb@ci.humboldt.ia.us>
To: <alumni@uiowa.edu>, <provost-office@uiowa.edu>, <president@uiowa.edu>
CC: <mbruns@iastate.edu>, <Tom.Shaw@legis.state.ia.us>,
<john.kibbie@legis.iowa.gov>, <kraig.paulsen@legis.state.ia.us>,
<stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Disappointing article in The Atlantic
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 11:55:52 -0600
Thread-Index: Acy6iWbysk/IX7vqQg+DPu1GHGnGXA==

http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/?single_page=true

All,

This article is incredibly embarrassing. I hope the University of Iowa's leaders realize that a large number of people across the nation are disappointed by this disingenuous work. You really need to evaluate who you let represent you on the national stage. I work diligently to combat this type of stereotype of Iowa and create job opportunities in rural Iowa. However, it only takes one article like this to tear down the hard work of so many people in the economic development field across Iowa. This article will make it more difficult to recruit employers and workforce to our state. I would hope the university will address this disgrace and make it clear that this is not acceptable behavior. I think one of the comments posted by a former student addresses the article better than I ever could:

Stephen Bloom,

This article is upsetting. Not so much because you churched-up a bunch of tired Iowa stereotypes (it's been done by so many "journalists," and I almost applaud the dog connection that eventually came full-circle. You obviously tried very hard to make that one work), but more so because I feel like you've been dishonest to my fellow University of Iowa School of Journalism students and myself. You were my favorite professor because I connected so deeply with your lesson plan. You taught me to write about Truth. You pushed us to avoid the shortcuts of perpetuating stereotypes. Instead, we were asked to look for the deeper, truer story. You even taught a Rural Reporting class, in which you encouraged us to visit Anytown, USA (the town on which I reported: Kalona, IA) and show readers what really drives these people. What did I find? Art, culture, a complex Amish heritage and a proud, middle-aged, same-sex couple.

I've long since moved South, and although I've seen a large amount of Baptist churches and Confederate flags in North Carolina, I wouldn't dream of labeling them all as Bible-beating racists. Because 1) that's just the small minority, and 2) as a human being, I respect my neighbors enough to avoid writing them off as nothing but an easy stereotype.

I'm disappointed by this article. Again, not because you knocked my favorite state in the world, but because you've taken a lazy shortcut that paints a legitimately inaccurate portrayal. You're obviously an accomplished writer, but I hope you know that you let me down. Not as an Iowan, but as a Journalist.

Jackie Kaeding

Respectfully,

Aaron Burnett

Aaron F. Burnett

City Administrator

City of Humboldt

PO Box 529

Humboldt, IA 50548

(515) 332-3435

Fax (515) 332-1453



[REDACTED]

Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 14:14:25 -0500
To: GaranceRuta@gmail.com
From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: EDIT back to you
Cc:
Bcc:
X-Attachments:

Garance,

So glad you like!

This year, I'm living in Ann Arbor, where I'm teaching at the University of Michigan. But since 1993, I've lived in Iowa City, and intend to return there in the fall. You can put the dateline as IOWA CITY because the story was written there.

I made some very minor changes and put them in boldface....

You have my tagline, right?

Stephen G. Bloom is Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar at the University of Iowa. This year, he is the Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor of Journalism at the University of Michigan. He is the author of Postville: A Clash of Cultures in Heartland America and The Oxford Project (with Peter Feldstein).

You're also welcome to use my email if readers want to contact me. I'm VERY interested in your offer to launch this into social media, so please do all that you do!

Thanks!

stephen

This is really marvelously written. A couple of questions: Do you live in Iowa City or outside of town some place? Any dateline we should use? I mainly just shortened the lede. If there's any changes you'd like to make, can you so so below in a return email in bold?

Thanks,
Garance

On January 3, Iowans will trudge through snow, sleet, sludge, ice, gale-force blizzards -- whatever it takes -- to join their neighbors that evening in 1,784 living rooms, community halls, recreation centers, and public-school gymnasiums in a kind of bygone-era town-hall meeting at which they'll eat and debate, and then vote for presidential candidates along party lines. Chat n' Chews, they are called.

These Iowa Caucuses create a seismic shift in the presidential nominating contests. Obama catapulted to the top of the Democrats' dance card when he captured 38 percent of Iowa voters in 2008, and then swept to victory at the Democratic Convention eight months later. Without such a strong initial showing in Iowa, Obama might not have been able to steamroll through subsequent state primaries to win the presidency.

Since Obama is the presumed Democratic candidate in 2012, this year it's the Republican candidates who have trained their attentions on the state these brisk, late-autumn days. They're falling over each other in front of grain elevators and cornfields, over biscuits and gravy in breakfast cafes, and at potluck dinners (casseroles are the thing to bring), glad-handing and backslapping as many Iowa voters they can. Great photo ops, you know. Hoisting a baby in the air is good politics. So's gulping down a brat (short for bratwurst).

Considering the state's enormous political significance, I thought this would be a good time to explain to the geographically challenged a little about Iowa, including where Iowa is, and perhaps more importantly, in both a real and metaphysical way, *what* Iowa is.

For almost 20 years I've lived in Iowa, where as a professor at the University of Iowa I've taught thousands of university students. I've written a couple of books on rural Iowa, and have spent much of my time when not teaching, visiting with and interviewing Iowans from across the state. I haven't taken up hunting or fishing, the main hobbies of rural Iowans, but I'm a fan of University of Iowa Hawkeye football, so I'm a good third of the way to becoming an adopted Iowan. I even have a dog, born and bred in Iowa (more on that later).

* * *

Iowa is not flat as a pancake (as most people think). The northeast of Cedar Rapids is actually pretty hilly. It's an agricultural (corns and soybeans), landlocked state. While Iowa's landmass is a little larger than England's, its population is only three million, about 17 times smaller than Britain's. The state's name derives from the Ioway Indians, one of several tribes that used to call the region home. Of Iowa's 99 counties, 88 are classified as rural. Iowa's capital and largest city is dreary Des Moines (pop: 203,000), whose primary business is insurance. The state is 96 percent white.

On the state's eastern edge lies the Mississippi River, dotted with towns with splendid names like Keokuk, Toolesboro, Fruitland, Muscatine, Montpelier, Buffalo, Sabula, Davenport, Dubuque, and Guttenberg. Each once was a booming city on the swollen banks of the river that long ago opened the middle of America to expansion, civilization, abundance, and prosperity. Not much travels along the muddy and polluted Mississippi these days except rusty-bucket barges of grain and an occasional kayaker circumnavigating garbage, beer cans, and assorted debris. The majestic river that once defined the United States has been rendered commercially irrelevant these days.

Mark Twain once lived in Southeast Iowa, in Keokuk, working at his brother's printing press. He also was employed nearby as a reporter for the *Muscatine Journal*. When Twain lived in Keokuk 150 years ago, the Gateway City was a sought-after destination; some seriously said Keokuk would someday rival Chicago as a metropolis of culture and commerce. Thirty-eight hotels crowned the intersection of the Mississippi and Des Moines Rivers. The coming of the railroads changed all that, and today, Keokuk, is a depressed, crime-infested slum town. Almost every other Mississippi river town is the same; they're some of the skuzziest cities I've ever been to, and that's saying something.

On Iowa's western frontier lies the Missouri River, which girds a huge, sparsely populated agricultural region anchored by Sioux City (pop: 83,000) in the state's northeast and Council Bluffs (pop: 62,230), across from the Nebraska hub of Omaha. Eskimo Pies, the original I-Scream Bar, was invented by a Danish immigrant in Onawa, a tiny town not far from the Missouri, and today you can visit an Eskimo Pie display at the Monona County Historical Museum there.

In between these two great, defining rivers, Iowa is a place of bizarre contrasts. The state is split politically: to the east of Des Moines, Iowa is solidly Democratic; to the west, it's rabidly Republican. Iowa's two U.S. Senators are emblematic of this schizophrenia: Fundamentalist Republican Charles Grassley and Ultra-liberal Democrat Tom Harkin. Grassley is 78; Harkin 72; both have held seats in either the U.S. Senate or House since 1975.

Insular Iowa is also home to the most conservative, and, some say, wackiest congressman in America, Republican Rep. Steve King, who represents the vast western third of the state. Some of King's doozies: calling Senator Joe McCarthy a "hero for America"; comparing illegal immigrants to stray cats that wind up on people's porches; and praying that Supreme Court "Justice Stevens and Justice Ginsberg fall madly in love with each other and elope to Cuba." Keith Olbermann named King not only the worst congressman in the U.S., but the Worst Person in the World six times.

Considering the above, not just a few Iowa heads turned when a District Court in Des Moines in 2007 declared same-sex marriages legal. Iowa, at the time, was the second state in the U.S. to allow gays to marry each other, a decision the state Supreme Court unanimously upheld two years later. In retaliation, Iowa conservatives in 2010 mounted a successful campaign to oust three of the justices who ruled on behalf of same-sex marriage. Marriage between two same-sex people is legal in Iowa for now, but may not be for long. A referendum is scheduled to appear on a statewide ballot.

Whether a schizophrenic, economically-depressed, and some say, culturally-challenged state like Iowa should host the first grassroots referendum to determine who will be the next president isn't at issue. It's been this way since 1972, and there are no signs that it's going to change. In a perfect world, no way would Iowa ever be considered representative of America, or even a small part of it. Iowa's not representative of much. There are few minorities, no sizable cities, and the state's about to lose one of its five seats in the U.S. House because its population is shrinking so precipitously. Still, thanks to a host of nonsensical political precedents, whoever wins the Iowa Caucuses in January will very likely have a 50 percent chance of being elected president 11 months later. Go figure.

Maybe Ambrose Bierce described it right when he called the U.S. president "the greased pig in the field game of American politics." For better or worse, Iowa's the place where that greased pig gets generally gets grabbed first.

* * *

Rural America has always been homogenous, as white as the milk the millions of Holstein cows here produce. Many towns are so insular that farmers from another county are strangers. Historically, at least since 1900, whether because it was too hard to get to, too uninviting, or promised too little, few newcomers chose to knock on America's Heartland door.

Iowa anchors the Upper American Heartland, the rural interior that produces much of the world's corn, pigs, cattle, and soybeans. The corn grows so fast in Iowa -- from seedlings to 7-foot-high stalks in 12 weeks -- that it crackles nonstop throughout the summer months. The sound is like popcorn popping slow-motion in a microwave. That **pop-pop-popping** can be heard especially in the early morning hours, as dew and fog cover the acres of gently swaying cornstalks that surround farming villages the way the sea encircles an island. Rows upon rows stretch further than most urban minds can fathom, leathery husks and silky tassels bending in unison to the shimmying breeze. From one angle the corn resembles a hodgepodge of gnarly green stalks, but from another, each plant appears positioned with precision next to another, next to another, an exacting maze, for thousands upon thousands of acres.

For any corn connoisseurs out there, don't think of poaching an ear from a field, boiling it *al dente*, then slathering on it hot butter. Almost all the corn Iowa farmers grow is feed corn, not sweet corn. It's meant for pigs, not humans, and tastes that way. Almost all of it gets stored in an elevator (elevators in rural America raise and lower grain, not people.)

Each isolated Iowa homestead is marked off by a stand of trees (usually maples, cottonwoods, sometimes basswoods), as much windbreak as shade grove from the blazing sun. Just about everyone wears a hat; farmer's tan is a condition every Iowan knows -- a blanched forehead above a leather-cured face. Ailing windmills stand unsure next to sturdy no-nonsense homes and dilapidated peeling-red barns, often with freshly tilled beds of Black-eyed

Susans or gladiolas in front.

In this land, deep within America, on Friday nights it's not unusual to take a date to a Tractor Pull or to a Combine Demolition Derby ("First they were thrashin', now they're CRASHIN'!"). There are few billboards along the washboard-bumpy, blacktop roads that slice through the countryside, only hand-drawn signs advertising sweet corn, cattle, lemonade, or boar semen. Driving through these throwback towns, a stranger might receive a slight nod from a farmer on the side of the road, or a two-finger driver's greeting from knobby fingers atop a pick-up's steering wheel. Strangers are rare in these parts. Why would they be here? What would bring someone with no business or family to such a remote pocket of America, where car alarms are as unheard of as home burglar alarms? Locals don't bother to put on their turn signals because everyone knows where everyone else is going. Some rural counties in Iowa don't have a single traffic light.

In the large towns (population more than 2,500), towering grain elevators are what you first see from a distance. In mid-sized towns, it's church steeples, their bell towers once a call to farmers toiling in the fields. Just about every town, no matter what size, has a water tower with the town name scrawled or stenciled on the tank's side. Each summer, the 4H and Future Farmers of America sponsor contests where teenagers vie for birthing and raising the best pig, lamb, goat, rooster or hen. Housewives compete for best pie (always with a no-fail pie crust). A float pulled by a farmer's pickup showcases smiling and often-hardy girls waving, to be crowned County Fair Queen, Dairy Queen, and Pork Queen. Kids compete in a Mom-calling contest; the loudest wins.

Iowa is these gently rolling plains, full of farms and barns and also millions of pigs and turkeys (twenty times as many people). But there also are too-many-to-count empty storefronts (and not coincidentally scores of flourishing Wal-Marts). The region has suffered terribly, particularly since the 1980's when the ravaged farm economy started spinning out of control into free-fall.

After winning the Iowa Caucuses three years ago, then-candidate Barack Obama didn't mince words about the lingering impact of the Farm Crisis.

Speaking at a San Francisco fundraiser, Obama said, "Like a lot of small towns in the Midwest, the jobs have been gone now for 25 years and nothing's replaced them. And they fell through the Clinton administration, and the Bush administration, and each successive administration has said that somehow these communities are gonna regenerate and they have not. So it's not surprising then that they get bitter, they cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren't like them or anti-immigrant sentiment or anti-trade sentiment as a way to explain their frustrations."

Obama got scalded for his comments. Those are tough sentiments to share with those caught in the middle. I imagine many in the rural Midwest must have said a variation of this -- "Whaddaya expect from a Harvard-educated, black city slicker who wouldn't know a John Deere tractor from an International Harvester combine?" And what better audience before which to piss on rural America than one filled with wealthy Bay Area Democrats, few of whom could pick out Iowa from Nebraska? If the audience wasn't primarily vegan, gluten-intolerant foodies, what came out of Obama's mouth was some of the most succulent red meat he could have tossed their way.

Coastal elites love to dump on Iowa the same way Manhattanites trash New Jersey. Iowa is the place East and West Coasters call "Fly-over Country." It didn't rate even a speck in Sol Steinberg's classic 1967 *New Yorker* cover. Obama's comments went over without a second thought, until they wafted back to the Heartland. What Average Joe in Iowa wants to admit he clings to anything -- except hunting, fishing, and the Hawkeyes? Guns, religion, xenophobia? Them's fightin' words.

Obama might have been wrong for telling the truth, which seldom happens in politics, but the future president was 100-percent accurate when he let slip his comments on the absolute and utter desperation in America's hollowed-out middle, in particular in the state where I live.

There's the idealized version of rural America, then there's the heartbreaking real version, the one Obama was talking about.

Take One: The fairytale rendering is pastoral and bucolic; sandy-haired children romping through fecund, shoulder-high corn with Lassie at their side. It's Field of Dreams meets Carousel with The Waltons thrown in for good measure. The ruddy, wooden Bridges of Madison County (where John Wayne was born) may be in the background as the camera pans wide.

Take Two: The nightmare reality is tens of thousands of laid-off rural factory workers, farmers who have lost their land to banks and agribusiness, legions of unemployed who have come to the realization that it makes no sense to look for work, since work pretty much no longer exists for them.

An illusionary, short-term salve has been the proliferation of casinos in the state. In the last two decades, Iowa has established 18 of these bell-clanging jackpot landmines and more are opening as the economy continues to go south and overseas. (But, of course, this is happening far and wide in the United States. Detroit has three downtown casinos for those who want something to do while in the Motor City.)

Maytag, the iconic American company that makes washer and dryers, is a good example of Iowa economics. Maytag's flagship operation had been based in Newton, Iowa, for more than a century (the company was founded by Fred Maytag in 1893). After Whirlpool bought Maytag in 2006, workers girded for the worst, which came a year later, when Maytag closed the two million square-foot plant, leaving 2,000 workers unemployed. In protest, workers left their boots hanging on the cyclone fence surrounding the plant. At its peak, Maytag employed 4,000 workers in Newton, a town of 16,000. The Newton plant was union; consolidation of Maytag and Whirlpool was shifted to nonunion facilities, as well as overseas.

In part, rural Iowa's economic malaise has been made all the more in-your-face by the thousands of undocumented immigrants arriving every week, trolling for work that pays indecent wages in some of the most dangerous jobs imaginable, mostly on under-regulated, non-union kill-floors of the rural slaughterhouses. The migrant workers (almost all young, single, Central American men) end up living in deplorable makeshift shantytowns that have cropped up over the last decade amid the splendor of green and golden fields.

Four states -- California, Texas, New York, and Florida -- get two-thirds of the nation's immigrants. But for many immigrants, these states serve only as ports of entry; once inside the U.S., these newcomers converge in rural America in waves of secondary migration. And some immigrants head directly inland, altogether bypassing American coastal cities. In Iowa, they almost all come for slaughterhouse jobs, where entry-level positions are plentiful and workers don't need to know a word of English. The only requirements are a strong stomach and a strong back, and a willingness to accept that the work and the pay don't match. It's no wonder Iowa locals spurn such jobs as knockers, stickers, bleeders, tail rippers, flankers, gutters, sawers, or plate boners, all of whom work on what amounts to a disassembly line. Turnover at these grueling jobs is higher than 100 percent a year; health benefits at most plants don't kick in for several months; but the first months in a slaughterhouse are the most dangerous, when accidents are most likely to occur.

How'd so many slaughterhouses get from the cities to the country? For more than a century, slaughterhouses were located in brawling cities like Chicago, Fort Worth, and Omaha. Chicago rose to prominence, in part, because of its famed cattle-processing industry. The city's Union Stock Yards opened in 1865 and eventually grew to 475 acres of slaughterhouses. Today, only one slaughterhouse remains in Chicago, a tiny boutique lamb and veal processor. All the rest have closed shop or moved to rural America.

In a fundamental shift in how meat was processed, industry leaders decades ago realized it made more sense to bring meatpacking plants to the corn-fed livestock than to truck livestock to far-off slaughterhouses in expensive cities with strong unions and government regulators poking their noses into the meatpackers' business. Mobile refrigeration

allowed processed meat to be trucked without spoilage. At the same time, the industry became highly mechanized. Innovations such as air- and electric-powered knives made expensive, skilled butchers superfluous. Mega plants in rural outposts became the norm. Hourly wages for union meat-production workers in 1980 peaked at \$19 per hour (1980 dollars), not including benefits. Today, starting pay is often barely minimum wage at rural slaughterhouses. Because packinghouses are located in such isolated pockets of America, employers don't have to pay wages competitive with jobs in more urban venues. It's take it or leave it, and most locals would rather leave it. For undocumented workers, though, these jobs are a bonanza.

About the only possible bright spot in the rural Iowa economy is wind energy. It's a huge on-the-come bet that may actually pay off. Iowa is the second largest producer of wind energy in the U.S. (Texas is the first). Twenty percent of all electricity in the state is generated by wind. Drive down Interstate 80 for any stretch in Iowa, and you'll pass wide-loads announcing what's in front and behind: 150-foot-long, 12-ton blades for wind turbines. You'll also pass "wind farms," surreal grassy outposts with row after row of huge white turbines, their blades spinning. It's the windmill updated, but this time for the masses.

But relatively few rural Iowans are employed in the business of wind energy. The bulk of jobs here are low-income ones most Iowans don't want. Many have simply packed up and left the state (which helps keep the unemployment rate statewide low). Those who stay in rural Iowa are often the elderly waiting to die, those too timid (or lacking in educated) to peer around the bend for better opportunities, an assortment of waste-toids and meth addicts with pale skin and rotted teeth, or those who quixotically believe, like Little Orphan Annie, that "The sun'll come out tomorrow."

It's no surprise then, really, that the most popular place for suicide in America isn't New York or Los Angeles, but the rural Middle, where guns, unemployment, alcoholism and machismo reign. Suicides in Iowa's rural counties are 13.55 per 100,000 residents; New York's suicide rate is 5.4 residents per 100,000. Hunting accidents are common, perhaps spurred by the elixir of alcohol, which seems to be the drink of choice whenever a man suits up in camo or orange overalls. Mental-health clinics have all but been shuttered in Flyover Country; in a budget crunch, they're the first to go. Other, more nuanced reasons for the high rate of suicide: Farmers and ranchers by occupational nature rely on themselves to solve problems; the stigma of depression prevents those affected most from seeking help -- if help existed. Some residents turn to church leaders (as Obama said), but few are genuinely qualified to offer that kind of counsel.

* * *

I live in Iowa City, a university town 60 miles west of the Mississippi, along Highway 80 (known as The Interstate to younger Iowans, just The Highway to older Iowans). Eighty is America's Main Street, bisecting Iowa, connecting the hallowed-out middle of Corpus Americana to the faraway coasts. Granted, I'm a transplant here, and when I lit out almost two decades ago for this territory, I didn't quite know what to expect. The first day I arrived from San Francisco, wandering about Iowa City during spring break, billed as a bustling Big Ten University town, I kept wondering, "Where is everyone?" I thought a neutron bomb had gone off; there were buildings but few, if any, people.

Today, I still not quite sure what I'd gotten myself into. I've lived in many places, lots of them foreign countries, but none has been more foreign to me than Iowa.

They speak English in Iowa. You understand the words fine. (Broadcasters, in fact, covet the Iowa "accent," since it could come from anywhere, devoid of regional inflections.) But if you listen closely, though, it's a wholly different manner of speaking from what folks on either coast are accustomed to.

Indoor parking lots are ramps, soda is pop, lollipops are suckers, grocery bags are sacks, weeds are volunteers, miniature golf is putt-putt, supper is never to be confused with dinner, cellars and basements are totally different

places, and boys under the age of 16 are commonly referred to as "Bud." Almost every Iowa house has a mudroom, so you don't track mud or pig shit into the kitchen or living room, even though the aroma of pig shit is absolutely venerated in Iowa: It's known to one and all here as "the smell of money."

Friday fish fries at the American Legion hall; grocery and clothing shopping at Wal-Mart; Christmas crèches with live donkeys, sheep and a neighborhood infant playing Baby Jesus; rifle-toting hunters stalking turkeys in the fall (better not go for a walk in the countryside in October or November). Not many cars in these parts of America. They're vehicles, pronounced ve-HICK-uls -- 4X4's, pick-ups, snowmobiles). Rural houses are modest, some might say drab. Everyone strives to be middle-class; and if you have some money, by God you'd never want to make anyone feel bad by showing it off. If you go to Florida for a cruise, you keep it to yourself. The biggest secret often is -- if you still own farmland -- exactly how many acres. Ostentatious is driving around town in a new Ford F-150 pickup.

The reason everyone seems related in small-town Iowa is because, if you go back far enough, many are, either by marriage or birth. In Iowa, names like Yoder, Snitker, Schroeder, and Slabach are as common as Garcia, Lee, Romero, Johnson, and Chen are in big cities.

Rules peculiar to rural Iowa that I've learned are hard and fast, seldom broken: Backdoors are how you always go into someone's house. Bar fights might not be weekly occurrences, but neither are they infrequent activities. Collecting is big --whether it's postcards, lamps, figurines, tractors, or engines. NASCAR is a spectator sport that folks can't get enough of. Old-timers answer their phones not with "hello," but with last names, a throwback to party-lines. Everyone's phone number in town starts with the same three-digit prefix.

Hats are essential. Men over 50 don't leave home without a penknife in their pocket. Old Spice is the aftershave of choice. Everyone knows someone who has had an unfortunate and costly accident with a deer (always fatal for the deer, sometimes for the human). Farming is a dangerous occupation; if farmers don't die from a mishap (getting a hand in an auger, clearing a stuck combine), they live with missing digits or limbs.

Comfort food reigns supreme. Meatloaf and pork chops are king. Casseroles (canned tuna or Tater tots) and Jell-O molds (cottage cheese with canned pears or pineapple) are what to bring to wedding receptions and funerals. Everyone loves Red Waldorf cake. Deer (killed with a rifle is good, with bow-and-arrow better) and handpicked morels are delicacies families cherish.

Religion is the glue that binds everyone, whether they're Catholic, Lutheran, or Presbyterian. You can't drive too far without seeing a sign for JESUS or ABORTION IS LEGALIZED MURDER. I'm forever amazed by how often I hear neighbors, co-workers, shoppers, and total strangers talk about religion. In the Hy-Vee grocery store, at neighborhood stop-and-chats, at the local public school, "See you at church!" is the common rejoinder. It's as though the local house of worship were some neighborhood social club -- which, of course, it is. professor I know at the University of Iowa chides her students for sitting in the back of a lecture hall, saying, "This isn't church, you know."

When my family and I first moved to Iowa, our first Easter morning I read the second-largest newspaper in the state (the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*) with this headline splashed across Page One: HE HAS RISEN. The headline broke all the rules I was trying to teach my young journalism students: the event was neither breaking nor could it be corroborated by two independent sources. The editors obviously thought that everyone knew who He was, and cared.

After years and years of in-your-face religion, I decided to give what has become an annual lecture, in which I urge my students not to bid strangers "Merry Christmas" or "Happy Easter," "Have you gotten all your Christmas shopping done?" or "Are you going to the Easter egg hunt?" Such well-wishes are not appropriate for everyone, I tell my charges gently. A cheery "Happy holidays!" will suffice. Small potatoes, I know, but did everyone have to proclaim their Christianity so loud and clear?

Maybe it wasn't such a good idea. One gutsy, red-in-the-face student told me in no uncertain terms that for the rest of her life, she would continue offering Merry Christmas and Happy Easter tidings to strangers, no matter what I, or anyone else, said, because, "That's just who I am and I'm not about to change. Ever!" Score one for sticking it to the ethnic interloper.

Such do-good obligation flourishes even when the words invoked don't have much to do with religion. After the University of Iowa played arch-rival Iowa State in football, one of my students got arrested for public intoxication. While walking back to her dormitory one Saturday afternoon, she paused to rest on the steps of the Old State Capitol Building, only to fall asleep until a police officer awakened her. All arrests in Iowa City are published in the local newspaper, and I asked her what had happened. "When my parents find out, they're going to be furious. I'll get called home for a Come-To-Jesus talk."

On the surface, this Come to Jesus moment had nothing to do with religion. Instead, it described a meeting in which your butt was about to be kicked for some serious, errant behavior, and if you didn't repent your evil ways, then there'd be hell to pay. Come to Jesus was a nonsectarian, equal-opportunity expression that could just as easily involve Jews, Moslems, or Hindus (if you could find any in Iowa) as it involved Christians. But it was vintage Iowa, invoking the name of Jesus as though everyone believed in the good Lord's son and his providence.

Of the students I teach, relatively few will stay in Iowa after they graduate. The net flow of Iowans is out, not in. Iowa's greatest export isn't corn, soybeans, or pigs; it's young adults. Many born in rural Iowa grow up educated due to the state's still-strong foundation of land-grant universities (although, that too is eroding) and abiding familial interest in education (on a per-capita basis, Iowa has more high school graduates than 49 other states). But once they're through college, they leave. Iowa is the number-two state in the nation in losing college-educated youth (only North Dakota loses more).

An interesting sidelight to the outflow problem is the rapid influx of Chinese students at the University of Iowa. The university vigorously recruits Chinese undergraduates, and has even set up an office in Beijing with the express purpose of attracting Chinese to study in Iowa (no other recruiting office exists anywhere else). Almost all come from well-heeled families, who pay full tuition for their children to attend college. Few speak passable English, almost all congregate in majors that require little English (math, biology and actuarial science), and many drive around town in brand-new sports cars. It's a strange sight to see in Flyover County -- dozens of Chinese students moving together en masse, the girls chattering away in Mandarin, always holding each others' hands. These wealthy, ill-prepared bonus babies are seen as the future of the University. If Iowa has fewer and fewer young people each year to fill the University's cavernous lecture halls, and the state is still a tough sell to coastal American kids, then it's China that's the next frontier as state support for higher education dwindles.

Today, half of Iowa's 952 incorporated towns have populations of fewer than 500 residents, and two-thirds of the state's towns have less than 1,000. Iowa is home to the highest per-capita percentage of people older than 85; the second highest of residents older than 75, and the third highest of people older than 65. The largest and most elegant house in many rural towns is the local funeral parlor. The graduating classes of most rural high schools are so small that an Iowa tradition calls for silk-screened T-shirts with the names of all classmates on the back. Most, if not all of these teenagers, have worked for a couple of weeks in the summer as detasslers, when they remove the pollen-producing tassel on the top of each corn plant, letting it drop to the ground, so that two varieties of corn will cross-breed and make a hybrid. The job has become an absolute rite of passage for rural Iowa kids.

And while it's changing fast, rural Iowa is still a place where homes sell for \$40,000 (some a lot less), serious crime is tee-peeing a high-school senior's front yard, and traffic is getting caught behind a tractor on Main Street. If rural Iowans ever drive on the highway (not much reason to do so, really), they welcome other vehicles accelerating on the entrance ramp, smiling, often motioning with their hand to move on over, as though gently patting the butt of a newborn.

The only smog comes from a late-autumn bonfire. Crime isn't way rampant in these rural towns, but it's edging

upwards, particularly in towns adjacent to slaughterhouses. On summer nights, you can still keep your keys in the ignition and run into the local Casey's for an Icey or to get a cherry-dipped cone at the DQ one town over. Rural Iowa is still the kind of place where parents drop off their kids at the municipal pool to swim all day long.

Iowa is a throwback to yesteryear and, at the same time, a cautionary tale of what lies around the corner.

Which brings up my dog. And here's why: My dog is a kind of crucible of Iowa.

What does Hannah, a 13-year-old Labrador, have to do with an analysis of the American electoral system and how screwy it is that a place like Iowa gets to choose -- before anyone else -- the person who may become the next leader of the free world?

For our son's eighth birthday, we wanted to get him a dog. Every boy needs a dog, my wife and I agreed, and off we went to an Iowa breeding farm to pick out an eight-week-old puppy that, when we knelt to pet her, wouldn't stop licking us. We chose a yellow Lab because they like kids, have pleasant dispositions, and I was particularly fond of her caramel-color coat. Labs don't generally bite people, although they do like to chew on shoes, hats, and sofa legs. Hannah was Marley before Marley.

Our son, of course, got tired of Hannah after a couple of months, and to whom did the daily obligation of walking the dog fall?

That's right. To me.

And here's the point: I can't tell you how often over the years I'd be walking Hannah in our neighborhood and someone in a pickup would pull over and shout some variation of the following:

"Bet she hunts well."

"Do much hunting with the bitch?"

"Where you hunt her?"

To me, it summed up Iowa. You'd never get a dog because you might just want to walk with the dog or to throw a ball for her to fetch. No, that's not a reason to own a dog in Iowa. You get a dog to track and bag animals that you want to stuff, mount, or eat.

That's the place that may very well determine the next U.S. president.

--

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From: Garance Franke-Ruta <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>
Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 11:56:04 -0500
X-Google-Sender-Auth: dA2iQ1TRs3Vj84fPXMJfm0JzzaQ
Subject: EDIT
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

This is really marvelously written. A couple of questions: Do you live in Iowa City or outside of town some place? Any dateline we should use? I mainly just shortened the lede. If there's any changes you'd like to make, can you so so below in a return email in bold?

Thanks,
Garance

On January 3, Iowans will trudge through snow, sleet, sludge, ice, gale-force blizzards -- whatever it takes -- to join their neighbors that evening in 1,784 living rooms, community halls, recreation centers, and public-school gymnasiums in a kind of bygone-era town-hall meeting at which they'll eat and debate, and then vote for presidential candidates along party lines. Chat n' Chews, they are called.

These Iowa Caucuses create a seismic shift in the presidential nominating contests. Obama catapulted to the top of the Democrats' dance card when he captured 38 percent of Iowa voters in 2008, and then swept to victory at the Democratic Convention eight months later. Without such a strong initial showing in Iowa, Obama might not have been able to steamroll through subsequent state primaries to win the presidency.

Since Obama is the presumed Democratic candidate in 2012, this year it's the Republican candidates who have trained their attentions on the state these past brisk autumn days, and who are now flooding into the state in earnest as the contest there intensifies along with the winter snows.

Considering the state's enormous political significance, I thought this would be a good time to explain to the geographically challenged a little about Iowa, including where Iowa is, and perhaps more importantly, in both a real and metaphysical way, what Iowa is.

For almost 20 years I've lived in Iowa, where as a professor at the University of Iowa I've taught thousands of university students. I've written a couple of books on rural Iowa, and have spent much of my time when not teaching, visiting with and interviewing Iowans from across the state. I haven't taken up hunting or fishing, the main hobbies of rural Iowans, but I'm a fan of University of Iowa Hawkeye football, so I'm a good third of the way to becoming an adopted Iowan. I even have a dog, born and bred in Iowa (more on that later).

* * *

Iowa is a flat, agricultural (corns and soybeans), landlocked state. While Iowa's landmass is a little larger than England's, its population is only three million, about 17 times smaller than Britain's. The state's name derives from the Ioway Indians, one of several tribes that used to call the region home. Of Iowa's 99 counties, 88 are classified as rural. Iowa's capital and largest city is dreary Des Moines (pop: 203,000), whose primary business is insurance. The state is 96 percent white.

On the state's eastern edge lies the Mississippi River, dotted with towns with splendid names like Keokuk, Toolesboro, Fruitland, Muscatine, Montpelier, Buffalo, Sabula, Davenport, Dubuque, and Guttenberg. Each once was a booming city on the swollen banks of the river that long ago opened the middle of America to expansion,

civilization, abundance, and prosperity. Not much travels along the muddy and polluted Mississippi these days except rusty-bucket barges of grain and an occasional kayaker circumnavigating garbage, beer cans, and assorted debris. The majestic river that once defined the United States has been rendered commercially irrelevant these days.

Mark Twain once lived in Southeast Iowa, in Keokuk, working at his brother's printing press. He also was employed nearby as a reporter for the *Muscatine Journal*. When Twain lived in Keokuk 150 years ago, the Gateway City was a sought-after destination; some seriously said Keokuk would someday rival Chicago as a metropolis of culture and commerce. Thirty-eight hotels crowned the intersection of the Mississippi and Des Moines Rivers. The coming of the railroads changed all that, and today, Keokuk, is a depressed, crime-infested slum town. Almost every other Mississippi river town is the same; they're some of the skuzziest cities I've ever been to, and that's saying something.

On Iowa's western frontier lies the Missouri River, which girds a huge, sparsely populated agricultural region anchored by Sioux City (pop: 83,000) in the state's northeast and Council Bluffs (pop: 62,230), across from the Nebraska hub of Omaha. Eskimo Pies, the original I-Scream Bar, was invented by a Danish immigrant in Onawa, a tiny town not far from the Missouri, and today you can visit an Eskimo Pie display at the Monona County Historical Museum there.

In between these two great, defining rivers, Iowa is a place of bizarre contrasts. The state is split politically: to the east of Des Moines, Iowa is solidly Democratic; to the west, it's rabidly Republican. Iowa's two U.S. Senators are emblematic of this schizophrenia: Fundamentalist Republican Charles Grassley and Ultra-liberal Democrat Tom Harkin. Grassley is 78; Harkin 72; both have held seats in either the U.S. Senate or House since 1975.

Insular Iowa is also home to the most conservative, and, some say, wackiest congressman in America, Republican Rep. Steve King, who represents the vast western third of the state. Some of King's doozies: calling Senator Joe McCarthy a "hero for America"; comparing illegal immigrants to stray cats that wind up on people's porches; and praying that Supreme Court "Justice Stevens and Justice Ginsberg fall madly in love with each other and elope to Cuba." Keith Olbermann named King not only the worst congressman in the U.S., but the Worst Person in the World six times.

Considering the above, not just a few Iowa heads turned when a District Court in Des Moines in 2007 declared same-sex marriages legal. Iowa, at the time, was the second state in the U.S. to allow gays to marry each other, a decision the state Supreme Court unanimously upheld two years later. In retaliation, Iowa conservatives in 2010 mounted a successful campaign to oust three of the justices who ruled on behalf of same-sex marriage. Marriage between two same-sex people is legal in Iowa for now, but may not be for long. A referendum is scheduled to appear on a statewide ballot.

Whether a schizophrenic, economically-depressed, and some say, culturally-challenged state like Iowa should host the first grassroots referendum to determine who will be the next president isn't at issue. It's been this way since 1972, and there are no signs that it's going to change. In a perfect world, no way would Iowa ever be considered representative of America, or even a small part of it. Iowa's not representative of much. There are few minorities, no sizable cities, and the state's about to lose one of its five seats in the U.S. House because its population is shrinking so precipitously. Still, thanks to a host of nonsensical political precedents, whoever wins the Iowa Caucuses in January will very likely have a 50 percent chance of being elected president 11 months later. Go figure.

Maybe Ambrose Bierce described it right when he called the U.S. president "the greased pig in the field game of American politics." For better or worse, Iowa's the place where that greased pig gets generally gets grabbed first.

* * *

Rural America has always been homogenous, as white as the milk the millions of Holstein cows here produce. Many towns are so insular that farmers from another county are strangers. Historically, at least since 1900, whether because it was too hard to get to, too uninviting, or promised too little, few newcomers chose to knock on America's Heartland door.

Iowa anchors the Upper American Heartland, the rural interior that produces much of the world's corn, pigs, cattle, and soybeans. The corn grows so fast in Iowa -- from seedlings to 7-foot-high stalks in 12 weeks -- that it crackles nonstop throughout the summer months. The sound is like popcorn popping slow-motion in a microwave. That pop-pop-popping can be heard especially in the early morning hours, as dew and fog cover the acres of gently swaying cornstalks that surround farming villages the way the sea encircles an island. Rows upon rows stretch further than most urban minds can fathom, leathery husks and silky tassels bending in unison to the shimmying breeze. From one

angle the corn resembles a hodgepodge of gnarly green stalks, but from another, each plant appears positioned with precision next to another, next to another, an exacting maze, for thousands upon thousands of acres.

For any corn connoisseurs out there, don't think of poaching an ear from a field, boiling it *al dente*, then slathering on it hot butter. Almost all the corn Iowa farmers grow is feed corn, not sweet corn. It's meant for pigs, not humans, and tastes that way. Almost all of it gets stored in an elevator (elevators in rural America raise and lower grain, not people.)

Each isolated Iowa homestead is marked off by a stand of trees (usually maples, cottonwoods, sometimes basswoods), as much windbreak as shade grove from the blazing sun. Just about everyone wears a hat; farmer's tan is a condition every Iowan knows -- a blanched forehead above a leather-cured face. Ailing windmills stand unsure next to sturdy no-nonsense homes and dilapidated peeling-red barns, often with freshly tilled beds of Black-eyed Susans or gladiolas in front.

In this land, deep within America, on Friday nights it's not unusual to take a date to a Tractor Pull or to a Combine Demolition Derby ("First they were thrashin', now they're CRASHIN'!"). There are few billboards along the washboard-bumpy, blacktop roads that slice through the countryside, only hand-drawn signs advertising sweet corn, cattle, lemonade, or boar semen. Driving through these throwback towns, a stranger might receive a slight nod from a farmer on the side of the road, or a two-finger driver's greeting from knobby fingers atop a pick-up's steering wheel. Strangers are rare in these parts. Why would they be here? What would bring someone with no business or family to such a remote pocket of America, where car alarms are as unheard of as home burglar alarms? Locals don't bother to put on their turn signals because everyone knows where everyone else is going. Some rural counties in Iowa don't have a single traffic light.

In the large towns (population more than 2,500), towering grain elevators are what you first see from a distance. In mid-sized towns, it's church steeples, their bell towers once a call to farmers toiling in the fields. Just about every town, no matter what size, has a water tower with the town name scrawled or stenciled on the tank's side. Each summer, the 4H and Future Farmers of America sponsor contests where teenagers vie for birthing and raising the best pig, lamb, goat, rooster or hen. Housewives compete for best pie (always with a no-fail pie crust). A float pulled by a farmer's pickup showcases smiling and often-hardy girls waving, to be crowned County Fair Queen, Dairy Queen, and Pork Queen. Kids compete in a Mom-calling contest; the loudest wins.

Iowa is these gently rolling plains, full of farms and barns and also millions of pigs and turkeys (twenty times as many people). But there also are too-many-to-count empty storefronts (and not coincidentally scores of flourishing Wal-Marts). The region has suffered terribly, particularly since the 1980's when the ravaged farm economy started spinning out of control into free-fall.

After winning the Iowa Caucuses three years ago, then-candidate Barack Obama didn't mince words about the lingering impact of the Farm Crisis.

Speaking at a San Francisco fundraiser, Obama said, "Like a lot of small towns in the Midwest, the jobs have been gone now for 25 years and nothing's replaced them. And they fell through the Clinton administration, and the Bush administration, and each successive administration has said that somehow these communities are gonna regenerate and they have not. So it's not surprising then that they get bitter, they cling to guns or religion or antipathy to people who aren't like them or anti-immigrant sentiment or anti-trade sentiment as a way to explain their frustrations."

Obama got scalded for his comments. Those are tough sentiments to share with those caught in the middle. I imagine many in the rural Midwest must have said a variation of this -- "Whaddaya expect from a Harvard-educated, black city slicker who wouldn't know a John Deere tractor from an International Harvester combine?" And what better audience before which to piss on rural America than one filled with wealthy Bay Area Democrats, few of whom could pick out Iowa from Nebraska? If the audience wasn't primarily vegan, gluten-intolerant foodies, what came out of Obama's mouth was some of the most succulent red meat he could have tossed their way.

Coastal elites love to dump on Iowa the same way Manhattanites trash New Jersey. Iowa is the place East and West Coasters call "Fly-over Country." It didn't rate even a speck in Sol Steinberg's classic 1967 *New Yorker* cover. Obama's comments went over without a second thought, until they wafted back to the Heartland. What Average Joe in Iowa wants to admit he clings to anything -- except hunting, fishing, and the Hawkeyes? Guns, religion, xenophobia? Them's fightin' words.

Obama might have been wrong for telling the truth, which seldom happens in politics, but the future president was 100-percent accurate when he let slip his comments on the absolute and utter desperation in America's hollowed-out middle, in particular in the state where I live.

There's the idealized version of rural America, then there's the heartbreaking real version, the one Obama was talking about.

Take One: The fairytale rendering is pastoral and bucolic; sandy-haired children romping through fecund, shoulder-high corn with Lassie at their side. It's Field of Dreams meets Carousel with The Waltons thrown in for good measure. The ruddy, wooden Bridges of Madison County (where John Wayne was born) may be in the background as the camera pans wide.

Take Two: The nightmare reality is tens of thousands of laid-off rural factory workers, farmers who have lost their land to banks and agribusiness, legions of unemployed who have come to the realization that it makes no sense to look for work, since work pretty much no longer exists for them.

An illusionary, short-term salve has been the proliferation of casinos in the state. In the last two decades, Iowa has established 18 of these bell-clanging jackpot landmines and more are opening as the economy continues to go south and overseas. (But, of course, this is happening far and wide in the United States. Detroit has three downtown casinos for those who want something to do while in the Motor City.)

Maytag, the iconic American company that makes washer and dryers, is a good example of Iowa economics. Maytag's flagship operation had been based in Newton, Iowa, for more than a century (the company was founded by Fred Maytag in 1893). After Whirlpool bought Maytag in 2006, workers girded for the worst, which came a year later, when Maytag closed the two million square-foot plant, leaving 2,000 workers unemployed. In protest, workers left their boots hanging on the cyclone fence surrounding the plant. At its peak, Maytag employed 4,000 workers in Newton, a town of 16,000. The Newton plant was union; consolidation of Maytag and Whirlpool was shifted to nonunion facilities, as well as overseas.

In part, rural Iowa's economic malaise has been made all the more in-your-face by the thousands of undocumented immigrants arriving every week, trolling for work that pays indecent wages in some of the most dangerous jobs imaginable, mostly on under-regulated, non-union kill-floors of the rural slaughterhouses. The migrant workers (almost all young, single, Central American men) end up living in deplorable makeshift shantytowns that have cropped up over the last decade amid the splendor of green and golden fields.

Four states -- California, Texas, New York, and Florida -- get two-thirds of the nation's immigrants. But for many immigrants, these states serve only as ports of entry; once inside the U.S., these newcomers converge in rural America in waves of secondary migration. And some immigrants head directly inland, altogether bypassing American coastal cities. In Iowa, they almost all come for slaughterhouse jobs, where entry-level positions are plentiful and workers don't need to know a word of English. The only requirements are a strong stomach and a strong back, and a willingness to accept that the work and the pay don't match. It's no wonder Iowa locals spurn such jobs as knockers, stickers, bleeders, tail rippers, flankers, gutters, sawers, or plate boners, all of whom work on what amounts to a disassembly line. Turnover at these grueling jobs is higher than 100 percent a year; health benefits at most plants don't kick in for several months; but the first months in a slaughterhouse are the most dangerous, when accidents are most likely to occur.

How'd so many slaughterhouses get from the cities to the country? For more than a century, slaughterhouses were located in brawling cities like Chicago, Fort Worth, and Omaha. Chicago rose to prominence, in part, because of its famed cattle-processing industry. The city's Union Stock Yards opened in 1865 and eventually grew to 475 acres of slaughterhouses. Today, only one slaughterhouse remains in Chicago, a tiny boutique lamb and veal processor. All the rest have closed shop or moved to rural America.

In a fundamental shift in how meat was processed, industry leaders decades ago realized it made more sense to bring meatpacking plants to the corn-fed livestock than to truck livestock to far-off slaughterhouses in expensive cities with strong unions and government regulators poking their noses into the meatpackers' business. Mobile refrigeration allowed processed meat to be trucked without spoilage. At the same time, the industry became highly mechanized. Innovations such as air- and electric-powered knives made expensive, skilled butchers superfluous. Mega plants in rural outposts became the norm. Hourly wages for union meat-production workers in 1980 peaked at \$19 per hour (1980 dollars), not including benefits. Today, starting pay is often barely minimum wage at rural slaughterhouses. Because packinghouses are located in such isolated pockets of America, employers don't have to pay wages competitive with jobs in more urban venues. It's take it or leave it, and most locals would rather leave it. For undocumented workers, though, these jobs are a bonanza.

About the only possible bright spot in the rural Iowa economy is wind energy. It's a huge on-the-come bet that may actually pay off. Iowa is the second largest producer of wind energy in the U.S. (Texas is the first). Twenty percent of

all electricity in the state is generated by wind. Drive down Interstate 80 for any stretch in Iowa, and you'll pass wide-loads announcing what's in front and behind: 150-foot-long, 12-ton blades for wind turbines. You'll also pass "wind farms," surreal grassy outposts with row after row of huge white turbines, their blades spinning. It's the windmill updated, but this time for the masses.

But relatively few rural Iowans are employed in the business of wind energy. The bulk of jobs here are low-income ones most Iowans don't want. Many have simply packed up and left the state (which helps keep the unemployment rate statewide low). Those who stay in rural Iowa are often the elderly waiting to die, those too timid (or lacking in educated) to peer around the bend for better opportunities, an assortment of waste-tooids and meth addicts with pale skin and rotted teeth, or those who quixotically believe, like Little Orphan Annie, that "The sun'll come out tomorrow."

It's no surprise then, really, that the most popular place for suicide in America isn't New York or Los Angeles, but the rural Middle, where guns, unemployment, alcoholism and machismo reign. Suicides in Iowa's rural counties are 13.55 per 100,000 residents; New York's suicide rate is 5.4 residents per 100,000. Hunting accidents are common, perhaps spurred by the elixir of alcohol, which seems to be the drink of choice whenever a man suits up in camo or orange overalls. Mental-health clinics have all but been shuttered in Flyover Country; in a budget crunch, they're the first to go. Other, more nuanced reasons for the high rate of suicide: Farmers and ranchers by occupational nature rely on themselves to solve problems; the stigma of depression prevents those affected most from seeking help -- if help existed. Some residents turn to church leaders (as Obama said), but few are genuinely qualified to offer that kind of counsel.

* * *

I live in Iowa City, a university town 60 miles west of the Mississippi, along Highway 80 (known as The Interstate to younger Iowans, just The Highway to older Iowans). Eighty is America's Main Street, bisecting Iowa, connecting the hallowed-out middle of Corpus Americana to the faraway coasts. Granted, I'm a transplant here, and when I lit out almost two decades ago for this territory, I didn't quite know what to expect. The first day I arrived from San Francisco, wandering about Iowa City during spring break, billed as a bustling Big Ten University town, I kept wondering, "Where is everyone?" I thought a neutron bomb had gone off; there were buildings but few, if any, people.

Today, I still not quite sure what I'd gotten myself into. I've lived in many places, lots of them foreign countries, but none has been more foreign to me than Iowa.

They speak English in Iowa. You understand the words fine. (Broadcasters, in fact, covet the Iowa "accent," since it could come from anywhere, devoid of regional inflections.) But if you listen closely, though, it's a wholly different manner of speaking from what folks on either coast are accustomed to.

Indoor parking lots are ramps, soda is pop, lollipops are suckers, grocery bags are sacks, weeds are volunteers, miniature golf is putt-putt, supper is never to be confused with dinner, cellars and basements are totally different places, and boys under the age of 16 are commonly referred to as "Bud." Almost every Iowa house has a mudroom, so you don't track mud or pig shit into the kitchen or living room, even though the aroma of pig shit is absolutely venerated in Iowa: It's known to one and all here as "the smell of money."

Friday fish fries at the American Legion hall; grocery and clothing shopping at Wal-Mart; Christmas crèches with live donkeys, sheep and a neighborhood infant playing Baby Jesus; rifle-toting hunters stalking turkeys in the fall (better not go for a walk in the countryside in October or November). Not many cars in these parts of America. They're vehicles, pronounced ve-HICK-uls -- 4X4's, pick-ups, snowmobiles). Rural houses are modest, some might say drab. Everyone strives to be middle-class; and if you have some money, by God you'd never want to make anyone feel bad by showing it off. If you go to Florida for a cruise, you keep it to yourself. The biggest secret often is -- if you still own farmland -- exactly how many acres. Ostentatious is driving around town in a new Ford F-150 pickup.

The reason everyone seems related in small-town Iowa is because, if you go back far enough, many are, either by marriage or birth. In Iowa, names like Yoder, Snitker, Schroeder, and Slabach are as common as Garcia, Lee, Romero, Johnson, and Chen are in big cities.

Rules peculiar to rural Iowa that I've learned are hard and fast, seldom broken: Backdoors are how you always go into someone's house. Bar fights might not be weekly occurrences, but neither are they infrequent activities. Collecting is big --whether it's postcards, lamps, figurines, tractors, or engines. NASCAR is a spectator sport that folks can't get enough of. Old-timers answer their phones not with "hello," but with last names, a throwback to party-lines. Everyone's phone number in town starts with the same three-digit prefix.

Hats are essential. Men over 50 don't leave home without a penknife in their pocket. Old Spice is the aftershave of choice. Everyone knows someone who has had an unfortunate and costly accident with a deer (always fatal for the deer, sometimes for the human). Farming is a dangerous occupation; if farmers don't die from a mishap (getting a hand in an auger, clearing a stuck combine), they live with missing digits or limbs.

Comfort food reigns supreme. Meatloaf and pork chops are king. Casseroles (canned tuna or Tater tots) and Jell-O molds (cottage cheese with canned pears or pineapple) are what to bring to wedding receptions and funerals. Everyone loves Red Waldorf cake. Deer (killed with a rifle is good, with bow-and-arrow better) and handpicked morels are delicacies families cherish.

Religion is the glue that binds everyone, whether they're Catholic, Lutheran, or Presbyterian. You can't drive too far without seeing a sign for JESUS or ABORTION IS LEGALIZED MURDER. I'm forever amazed by how often I hear neighbors, co-workers, shoppers, and total strangers talk about religion. In the Hy-Vee grocery store, at neighborhood stop-and-chats, at the local public school, "See you at church!" is the common rejoinder. It's as though the local house of worship were some neighborhood social club -- which, of course, it is. professor I know at the University of Iowa chides her students for sitting in the back of a lecture hall, saying, "This isn't church, you know."

When my family and I first moved to Iowa, our first Easter morning I read the second-largest newspaper in the state (the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*) with this headline splashed across Page One: HE HAS RISEN. The headline broke all the rules I was trying to teach my young journalism students: the event was neither breaking nor could it be corroborated by two independent sources. The editors obviously thought that everyone knew who He was, and cared.

After years and years of in-your-face religion, I decided to give what has become an annual lecture, in which I urge my students not to bid strangers "Merry Christmas" or "Happy Easter," "Have you gotten all your Christmas shopping done?" or "Are you going to the Easter egg hunt?" Such well-wishes are not appropriate for everyone, I tell my charges gently. A cheery "Happy holidays!" will suffice. Small potatoes, I know, but did everyone have to proclaim their Christianity so loud and clear?

Maybe it wasn't such a good idea. One gutsy, red-in-the-face student told me in no uncertain terms that for the rest of her life, she would continue offering Merry Christmas and Happy Easter tidings to strangers, no matter what I, or anyone else, said, because, "That's just who I am and I'm not about to change. Ever!" Score one for sticking it to the ethnic interloper.

Such do-good obligation flourishes even when the words invoked don't have much to do with religion. After the University of Iowa played arch-rival Iowa State in football, one of my students got arrested for public intoxication. While walking back to her dormitory one Saturday afternoon, she paused to rest on the steps of the Old State Capitol Building, only to fall asleep until a police officer awakened her. All arrests in Iowa City are published in the local newspaper, and I asked her what had happened. "When my parents find out, they're going to be furious. I'll get called home for a Come-To-Jesus talk."

On the surface, this Come to Jesus moment had nothing to do with religion. Instead, it described a meeting in which your butt was about to be kicked for some serious, errant behavior, and if you didn't repent your evil ways, then there'd be hell to pay. Come to Jesus was a nonsectarian, equal-opportunity expression that could just as easily involve Jews, Moslems, or Hindus (if you could find any in Iowa) as it involved Christians. But it was vintage Iowa, invoking the name of Jesus as though everyone believed in the good Lord's son and his providence.

Of the students I teach, relatively few will stay in Iowa after they graduate. The net flow of Iowans is out, not in. Iowa's greatest export isn't corn, soybeans, or pigs; it's young adults. Many born in rural Iowa grow up educated due to the state's still-strong foundation of land-grant universities (although, that too is eroding) and abiding familial interest in education (on a per-capita basis, Iowa has more high school graduates than 49 other states). But once they're through college, they leave. Iowa is the number-two state in the nation in losing college-educated youth (only North Dakota loses more).

An interesting sidelight to the outflow problem is the rapid influx of Chinese students at the University of Iowa. The university vigorously recruits Chinese undergraduates, and has even set up an office in Beijing with the express purpose of attracting Chinese to study in Iowa (no other recruiting office exists anywhere else). Almost all come from well-heeled families, who pay full tuition for their children to attend college. Few speak passable English, almost all congregate in majors that require little English (math, biology and actuarial science), and many drive around town in brand-new sports cars. It's a strange sight to see in Flyover County -- dozens of Chinese students moving together en masse, the girls chattering away in Mandarin, always holding each others' hands. These wealthy, ill-prepared bonus

babies are seen as the future of the University. If Iowa has fewer and fewer young people each year to fill the University's cavernous lecture halls, and the state is still a tough sell to coastal American kids, then it's China that's the next frontier as state support for higher education dwindles.

Today, half of Iowa's 952 incorporated towns have populations of fewer than 500 residents, and two-thirds of the state's towns have less than 1,000. Iowa is home to the highest per-capita percentage of people older than 85; the second highest of residents older than 75, and the third highest of people older than 65. The largest and most elegant house in many rural towns is the local funeral parlor. The graduating classes of most rural high schools are so small that an Iowa tradition calls for silk-screened T-shirts with the names of all classmates on the back. Most, if not all of these teenagers, have worked for a couple of weeks in the summer as detassellers, when they remove the pollen-producing tassel on the top of each corn plant, letting it drop to the ground, so that two varieties of corn will cross-breed and make a hybrid. The job has become an absolute rite of passage for rural Iowa kids.

And while it's changing fast, rural Iowa is still a place where homes sell for \$40,000 (some a lot less), serious crime is tee-peeing a high-school senior's front yard, and traffic is getting caught behind a tractor on Main Street. If rural Iowans ever drive on the highway (not much reason to do so, really), they welcome other vehicles accelerating on the entrance ramp, smiling, often motioning with their hand to move on over, as though gently patting the butt of a newborn.

The only smog comes from a late-autumn bonfire. Crime isn't way rampant in these rural towns, but it's edging upwards, particularly in towns adjacent to slaughterhouses. On summer nights, you can still keep your keys in the ignition and run into the local Casey's for an Icey or to get a cherry-dipped cone at the DQ one town over. Rural Iowa is still the kind of place where parents drop off their kids at the municipal pool to swim all day long.

Iowa is a throwback to yesteryear and, at the same time, a cautionary tale of what lies around the corner.

Which brings up my dog. And here's why: My dog is a kind of crucible of Iowa.

What does Hannah, a 13-year-old Labrador, have to do with an analysis of the American electoral system and how screwy it is that a place like Iowa gets to choose -- before anyone else -- the person who may become the next leader of the free world?

For our son's eighth birthday, we wanted to get him a dog. Every boy needs a dog, my wife and I agreed, and off we went to an Iowa breeding farm to pick out an eight-week-old puppy that, when we knelt to pet her, wouldn't stop licking us. We chose a yellow Lab because they like kids, have pleasant dispositions, and I was particularly fond of her caramel-color coat. Labs don't generally bite people, although they do like to chew on shoes, hats, and sofa legs. Hannah was Marley before Marley.

Our son, of course, got tired of Hannah after a couple of months, and to whom did the daily obligation of walking the dog fall?

That's right. To me.

And here's the point: I can't tell you how often over the years I'd be walking Hannah in our neighborhood and someone in a pickup would pull over and shout some variation of the following:

"Bet she hunts well."

"Do much hunting with the bitch?"

"Where you hunt her?"

To me, it summed up Iowa. You'd never get a dog because you might just want to walk with the dog or to throw a ball for her to fetch. No, that's not a reason to own a dog in Iowa. You get a dog to track and bag animals that you want to stuff, mount, or eat.

That's the place that may very well determine the next U.S. president.

--

Garance Franke-Ruta
Senior Editor (Politics), The Atlantic
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ce: (202)904-5413
gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com

<http://twitter.com/thegarance>

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/>

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 16:30:04 -0600
Subject: Eric Moore * The Daily Iowan
From: Eric David Moore <ericmoore1992@gmail.com>
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Stephen Bloom,

Hello. My name is Eric Moore and I'm reporter with the DI.

I am just emailing to confirm the DMRegister article:

<http://blogs.desmoinesregister.com/dmr/index.php/2011/12/13/stephen-bloom-cites-frightening-feedback-to-atlantic-article/>

Was accurate in its statements about you fearing for your family's safety.

Also, I if you have any comment to the DI, feel free to email me before 6 p.m. tonight.

Thank you for your time,

--

[Eric Moore](#)

[Metro Reporter](#)

[The Daily Iowan](#)

[cell \(515-979-3363\)](#)

<http://www.dailyiowan.com>

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 23:39:55 -0600

Subject: Fan Mail

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Mr. Bloom,

I'm writing in response to your recent article that was published in The Atlantic. I'm sure you've been receiving much backlash from your neighbors, colleagues, and the general public about many of the statements you've made. I'd like to add to your hate mail collection.

You are a disgrace to our state. People such as yourself are exactly the reason that Iowa is not moving forward. In your twenty years as an "Iowan" you have failed to open your eyes and see what being an Iowan is truly about. Iowans are proud of their state. People don't choose to live here because of the bustling nightlife, the cultural diversity, or the booming economic climate. People live in Iowa because of what they choose to hold valuable. Things such as family, hard work, education, loyalty, kindness, and generosity.

As a young Iowan, I realize that this is not the ideal place for a young professional. We don't have the best of everything, or the best of anything for that matter. The nightlife is sub-par, there is limited access to sports and the arts, and 6 months out of the year I'm freezing my can off. But I love my state, I'm proud of where I'm from, and I'm determined to make this place the best it can be for myself and future generations. Sure, there are rural and dumpy river towns in Iowa, but there are rural and dumpy towns in every state. (You're from Jersey aren't you, you should know.) To draw a conclusion about the entire state of Iowa based on our "scuzzy" towns is the same as drawing a conclusion about the entire state of New Jersey by watching an episode of the Jersey Shore- now that's some scuzz.

Iowa needs people who are proud of their state, who want to see its cities grow and who want to contribute. We need people who care about making this a great place to live, work, and raise a family. You, sir, are a pessimistic, egotistical, and are a total buzzkill. If you don't like our state, what we stand for, or our politics, nobody is keeping you here. And I highly doubt anyone would notice or care if you left, you don't seem like you'd be the life of the party. If I were you I'd stick to writing about pearls.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sender: <messages-noreply@bounce.linkedin.com>
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 14:24:54 +0000
From: [REDACTED] via LinkedIn <member@linkedin.com>
Reply-To: [REDACTED]
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Former student note
X-LinkedIn-Template: email_type_MEBC_MEBC
X-LinkedIn-Class: MBR-TO-MBR
X-LinkedIn-fbl: [REDACTED]

LinkedIn

[REDACTED] has sent you a message.

Date: 12/14/2011

Subject: Former student note

Dear Professor Bloom,

I wanted to send you a note to tell you that, as a native Northeasterner, I completely understand your recent statements about Iowa (I read about them on Facebook!). As you no doubt know, certain Iowans are flipping their lids over any criticism, but everything you wrote/said was apt, I think. Loved the bit about the Mississippi river towns, especially (Keokuk!), and I would add that Cedar Rapids always struck me as a Third World pseudo-city. I believe I said something to that effect (and I also called the Iowa news "bush league" in your class). That did not make the Iowans happy, but the truth just comes out sometimes. I always try to be polite, respectful, etc., but it's just the truth. I loved Iowa City, but the rest of the state? Some of it is lovely, some of it is (nicest way to put it) "meh."

Anyway, I wish you well and hope you sell truckloads of books.

Speaking of books, I have a collection I edited that should be out by [REDACTED] or so: it's entitled [REDACTED] and it's a collection of [REDACTED] creative work, essays, poems and art. I am a contributor as well as the editor. The book is being published by [REDACTED], the publishing arm of the literary web site, [REDACTED]

I am also trying to get out my memoir, [REDACTED], but the publishing climate is impossible and the topic is controversial that I am having little luck. The climate is so bad that even my highly praised (by agents and editors) YA novel, [REDACTED], can't find a home...probably because there is no obvious action figure that comes to mind, and I didn't write it as part of a series, and it's not about vampires or werewolves. Because of this, I am launching my own micropress to help teachers publish.

In the meantime, I am desperately trying to find a college level teaching job. I have been teaching writing as an adjunct and in prep school for about 10 years now, and it has mostly been a joy. Right now, I am being considered (I hope) for an Ass't Professor of Creative Nonfiction (secondary specialization in Poetry) position at [REDACTED] University. As you might know, I have my MFA in Nonfiction from UI.

[REDACTED]

It just struck me, as I sit here typing this, that perhaps I could ask you if you might possibly be amenable to writing me a brief reference letter? I will understand if you don't think you can. But if you can, let me take the liberty of sending you the contact information. I actually have it right here in front of me. I apologize for the audacity of the request, but it's just easier for me to send it now, in case you think you might be able to help me. I do need the help, and I know I'm a good writing teacher. I hope you remember me even slightly!

Any reference letter you might want to write for me must go to:

[REDACTED]

Thanks for reading this way-too-long note, Professor Bloom, and again, I wish you good luck with everything! If there's one thing I know about, it's dealing with nasty comments, criticisms on stupid comment boards and offensive Op Eds! Hang in there and just measure the press in inches...

Best,

[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 21:41:50 -0600

>Subject: friend, not foe

>From: Amy Charles <amycharles1@gmail.com>

>To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Hey Steve,

>

>Fuck 'em. And congratulations on having tenure. I made the non-mistake

>of saying publicly a couple weeks ago that Iowa's not Georgetown (which

>I'd thought was, you know, obvious and

>inoffensive) and the shitstorm that ensued bagged two deans and a

>couple other high earners, ending in my losing a piddly at-will

>university post.

>

>They're a little touchy. I see no reason to indulge it much.

>

>Amy

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

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Age Group	Percentage
18-24	10%
25-34	35%
35-44	25%
45-54	15%
55-64	10%
65-74	5%
75-84	3%
85+	2%

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 23:39:46 -0800

 \succ

>know I knew you.) I haven't read it yet, but I will.

>

[REDACTED]

Stephen G. Bloom

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

1000

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Hello Prof. Bloom.

>

>I doubt you remember me. I took one of your magazine writing classes in
>the early 1990s. My name is [REDACTED].

>

>and I love the city. And yes, not a single city in Iowa is as

>metropolitan as Chicago.

>

>your Atlantic article. You stereotyped and you got your facts wrong.

>In short, you were lazy, and I hope you're embarrassed. I used to speak

>well of you, but I never will again.

>

> [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Subject: from the squalorous shanty town of Ames

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Yawn. You're just another "writer" trying to make yourself stand out

>from the herd by being outrageous and controversial.

>

>Boring.

>

✓

>lowan for 40 years with all my teeth

—

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

Subject: FW: Iowans respond to Bloom's article
Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 09:00:32 -0500
Thread-Topic: Iowans respond to Bloom's article
Thread-Index: Acy68dwQBp3HIIVZRAOp3Vj2zIQBrwAQA0pF
From: "Franke-Ruta, Garance" <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Figured since this guy is your colleague you'd want to know about this one. On review I think from the context you were talking about the upper Midwest when you were talking about the cows, not Iowa. There are fewer than 200K milk cows in the state.

-----Original Message-----

From: William Jennings [<mailto:william-jennings@uiowa.edu>]
Sent: Thu 12/15/2011 1:21 AM
To: Franke-Ruta, Garance
Subject: Iowans respond to Bloom's article

Dear Ms. Franke-Ruta,

Mr. Bloom's observations about the problems faced by the state where he has made his living for the last 20 years are not entirely off-base or lacking in merit.

That's not what bothers many of those who actually took time to read the article through more than once, and who are also well aware of and even intimately familiar with his other work that is place-based narrative (Postville, The Oxford Project).

As a graduate of the Nonfiction Writing Program (MFA 1997) at The University of Iowa, as someone who has travelled this state as a working musician for over twenty years, and as someone who has worked in the food industry (helping to start one of the nation's first and most successful cooperative natural foods wholesale distributors, talking with small town citizens and farmers, driving trucks to deliver food to homes, churches, legion halls, and tiny store fronts---most of this during the 1980's Reagan Farm Crisis), and as someone who now teaches writing, reading, and critical thinking to University of Iowa undergraduates, I'm beyond obvious bait laid out in Bloom's flat, cliché riddled prose. The problems addressed by Bloom are urgent and have significant scope. They are also problems facing nearly all of the states through the Rust Belt, New England, and other regions---many the direct result of the deregulation frenzy begun under Reagan-Bush and now being preached as high sermons by those contending for the GOP nomination.

One thousand acres of Iowa crop land soaks up oil by the barrel. The fertilizer its industry-driven monoculture requires consumes significant amounts of oil to manufacture. The petrochemicals sprayed on mono crop agriculture are more barrels of oil. The machines, the driers, the processing plants for high fructose corn syrup, cheap beef, cheap pork, and cheap chicken, all demand underpriced commodities for input---and those underpriced commodities include the people who work in those plants and on those farms, whose injury and suicide rates are higher than most if not nearly all occupations. Bloom wants to claim he is shining a light into the dark corners where scurrilous work is being conducted beyond the knowledge of "coastals" and the meth-addled, Wal-Mart pacified, hunting obsessed, Jell-o Mold cranking locals who may well be drowning in billions of gallons of milk gushing from the "millions of Holstein cows" in our state..if any of that crap were actually true (the current Iowa Dairy herd is roughly 200,000.)

The problem with Mr. Bloom is Mr. Bloom's ego-driven, lazy, and self-aggrandizing pose. His facts are often wrong and unnecessarily so. If he had serious things to say and The Atlantic wished to publish an article about the relevant implications for Iowa's relevance, or lack of same, in an election year, he could have used the opportunity afforded him by your magazine to do so. Instead, he submitted you a half-baked string of lazy caricature in some half-considered attempt at an essay of implication. Your editorial staff alone should take what appeared in print as direct evidence to their negligence and unwillingness to call out a writer for not bothering to produce work to the standards of your publication. I've met Mr. Bloom on many occasions and shared a stage with him on Public Radio for a program mixing music and commentary. He's not a stranger to me. And he's not my perpetrator or bully or, convenient target for ad hominem attack. He was someone I considered a colleague. I don't anymore, not because of his hackneyed commentary about Iowans. But because of his use of one of our country's few remaining platforms for nonfiction writers to speak from authority, and rather than argue how literacy implicates us in our increasingly urgent work of democracy from the bottom up, he pulls out all the cheesy stops to endear himself to those who are perhaps sick of hearing about Iowa and it's role in the national political chitter chatter. And he does so at the expense, the real expense of those on whose real suffering and chronic problems he can conveniently don as a cloak for the pub shot and then toss off for its coarse and unpleasantness.

This isn't about the lack of perspective or that he failed to note the Iowa Tourism Brochure talking points, or the equally offensive stereotypes of "Iowa Nice".

It is about false assertions entwined with surface observational commentary and inserting it into hyperbolic, inaccurate, cliché saturated and smug narrative while fluffing your resumé and triumphing your own lack of substance as supplant for actual "style". And that is the indelible stamp of a hack. Period.

Will Jennings
Rhetoric Department
Creative Campus Institute Fellow 2011-2012
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University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

william-jennings@uiowa.edu
319.335.2593 Office
319.321.2995 Mobile

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Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

From: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 08:59:35 -0500
Subject: Fwd: FW: letter to editor on Bloom piece
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Franke-Ruta, Garance** <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>
Date: Thu, Dec 15, 2011 at 8:56 AM
Subject: FW: letter to editor on Bloom piece
To: garanceruta@gmail.com

-----Original Message-----

From: [REDACTED]
Sent: Wed 12/14/2011 6:08 PM
To: Franke-Ruta, Garance
Subject: letter to editor on Bloom piece

Dear Miss Franke-Ruta,

I'm sure you've received a great deal of responses from Iowans in regards to Stephen Bloom's recent article. I would like to share my response as well. I'm not sure if you are able to print such letters but I would appreciate you reading my one-page attachment. I grew up in Keokuk, Iowa and I am a former-student of Professor Bloom's. My blood doth boil over.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

--

<http://twitter.com/thegarance>

Content-Type: application/octet-stream; name="letter to editor.doc.docx"
Content-Disposition: attachment; filename="letter to editor.doc.docx"
X-Attachment-Id: d0f6a419654d0780_0.1

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

X-SpamScore: 0

X-BigFish: VPS0(zzc85fhzz1202hzz8275ch8275bh8275dhz2fh47h2a8h668h839h)

X-Forefront-Antispam-Report:

CIP:65.55.171.153;KIP:(null);UIP:(null);IPV:NLI;H:VA3DIAHUB048.RED001.local;RD:smtp801.microsoftonline.com;EFVD:NLI

From: Diane Heldt <Diane.Heldt@sourcemedia.net>

To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 10:18:40 -0800

Subject: Gazette interview

Thread-Topic: Gazette interview

Thread-Index: Acy6jJiCiUAdSzDGTiWED10P9OJA2g==

Accept-Language: en-US

acceptlanguage: en-US

Professor Bloom,

I'd like to speak with you today about the reaction to your Atlantic piece. Let me know if there is a phone number where I can reach you, or if you prefer that I send questions by email I can do that. Thanks.

Diane

Diane Heldt

Higher education reporter

201 S. Clinton St. Suite 200

Iowa City, Iowa 52240

W: 319-339-3158

C: 319-270-7569

diane.heldt@sourcemedia.net



Content-Type: image/png; name="image001.png"

Content-Description: image001.png

Content-Disposition: inline; filename="image001.png"; size=8620;

creation-date="Wed, 14 Dec 2011 18:18:42 GMT";

modification-date="Wed, 14 Dec 2011 18:18:42 GMT"

Content-ID: <image001.png@01CCBA5A.839A9230>

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 12:17:35 -0600

From: [REDACTED]

Reply-To: [REDACTED]

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: GOT IT. THANKS. Re: you can't let the turkeys get you down

X-ELNK-Trace:

X-Originating-IP [REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: stephen bloom

Sent: Dec 14, 2011 12:16 PM

To: [REDACTED]

Subject: you can't let the turkeys get you down

you can't let the turkeys get you down

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject:

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:37:31 -0600

Professor Bloom,

I read your article "Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life." Reading a fellow outsider's view of our state was very refreshing. Thanks.

Happy Holidays!

[REDACTED]

Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 07:24:10 -0600

Subject: Re: My take on Iowa

From: [REDACTED]

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

That is a great read Steve -- insightful and thought-provoking with great humor mixed in all of the right places.

[REDACTED]

P.S. My wife and I get the same kind of comments about our beagle, [REDACTED] when we walk him around the neighborhood. One guy even asked my wife if our dog was fixed because he'd "like to breed him."

Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 13:35:40 -0500

From: [REDACTED]

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: Re: My take on Iowa

X-CubMail-Sender: [REDACTED]

X-No-Spam-Score: Local

Steve,

Wow. . . that's the Iowa I know from living there just one year. That's the best thing on the state I've ever read, and I read a lot for my book.

I hope the Kevlar duds come in time before the hit squads come to Michigan.

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: My take on Iowa
Date: Sun, 11 Dec 2011 04:54:14 -0500
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Thanks for the memories.

When we lived on the edge of Downtown in Des Moines, [REDACTED] reminded me we were warned not to go walking behind our house during hunting season. At other times, we had to be alert for bow and arrow sharp shooters out to bag an authorized a wandering deer for an authorized bounty,

You won't need that vest in the UI journalism building. The faculty won't come across your brilliant vivid portrait because it appears in a popular mainstream magazine.

If you ever have to pack up in Iowa City, you can come to Connecticut where the lethal vessels are not bullets, but narrow minded gossip. Of course, our new state isn't without religious bias. One New Yorker who moved here reports she left a few years ago after one more slight. A fellow country club member in Avon remarked to her husband about the new green dress she was wearing.: "Look at the Jew girl all dressed up for Christmas."

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject:
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:37:31 -0600

Professor Bloom,

I read your article "Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life." Reading a fellow outsider's view of our state was very refreshing. Thanks.

Happy Holidays!

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Stephen--I apologize for Iowans--at least read the bold lines in my email
Thread-Topic: Stephen--I apologize for Iowans--at least read the bold lines in my email
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:56:25 -0600
Accept-Language: en-US

Hello Stephen,

First I want to apologize for Iowans who may have threatened you. I am a dental student here at the University and grew up in a small Iowa town my whole life [REDACTED] before coming here. I agree that we have our problems as Iowans but one thing we are is fiercely loyal. Your article is true (for the most part) about rural Iowans but anyone from here, esp us city folk, are going to be upset by that stereotype.

Traveling internationally is one of my favorite things to do in life so I have seen a fair chunk of the world and been to nearly every state. Iowa is a bit hickish in parts and we def have our tractors. Whether good or bad I'll agree your description is fair for, in my estimates, 30% of Iowans. However Iowans are the friendliest people I've seen as they will say hi and bye and smile at everyone, even in Iowa City. We are safe, trusting and generally well educated. I know the backlash you have received based on your article. **Perhaps you could write another article about all the good parts of Iowa you have seen? I'm sure you've seen some of the good Iowa has if nothing else pride in our state haha. It would be a great PR move.**

Just tossing that out as an idea. Now back to studying for my oral maxillofacial surgery class so I can take care of Iowas meth mouth patients :).

Best of luck to you,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: 'stephen bloom' <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: RE: My take on Iowa
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:58:15 -0600
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]

I definitely, totally, enjoyed the article. And you are so correct on everything you printed. (After reading the comments, perhaps my age has something to do with my attitude and approval.) A few things about Iowa surprised me and entertained me. And the Chinese commentary really surprised me.

By the way, what do they hunt in Michigan ??
[REDACTED]

P.S. The comments go on and on and on. To me that verifies a great article. Some interesting reading there.

And, yes, order the EXTRA reinforced Kevlar

[REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
From: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: 20 years in Iowa
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 19:14:27 -0600

December 14, 2011

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Re: 20 years in Iowa

Dear Prof. Bloom:

I grew up in Iowa and eventually returned 25 years later (with some sojourns in Iowa City in my twenties and early 30's--**which does not count as living in Iowa**). I can attest to the statement that Iowa is "*. . . political schizophrenic, economically depressed, and culturally challenged*". Every year, my wife and I (she is an [REDACTED] native) have to bug out for [REDACTED] for two months in order to regain our sanity. Of interest, is the fact that we sit on a [REDACTED], 25 miles from [REDACTED], one mile from a meth infested former glory town of [REDACTED] (logging & salmon fishing). However, even the druggies are engaged and aware of the world around them for at least a 400 miles radius. In rural Iowa, that awareness generally extends to a five mile radius.

Most of the comments that I have read highlight Iowa citizen's lack of self regard and self esteem. It extends from rural Iowa to the cities.

Most of the comments highlight the lack of true travel to other geographic areas or cultures. You cannot expand if you travel in a herd of like minded people.

Most of the comments from former Iowans fail to mention that few will return to their hometowns to settle. Most of these people visit for a week a year. The locals are always careful to be open and welcoming for a few days. However, if that same former Iowan returned to live, life would be very difficult: even in their home town (I was once accused of wearing the wrong farmer hat and

"going the wrong way in a Fareway grocery store").

I can go on and on. However, I do know that my wife and I moved back to the community that has been home to our family for 155 years and when I didn't do things the "*Iowa Way*", a large cross section of the welcoming community attempted to run us out of town---via threats, ostracism, dirty tricks, and attempted violence. We are still here because the locals were nothing more than stupid bullies with no backbone even when they outnumbered us 5 to 1.

Keep up the good work!

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 20:44:29 -0600

Subject: Inquiry from former student

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Professor Bloom,

My name is [REDACTED] I'm a fresh alumnus of Iowa with degrees in English and Political Science (a minor in Philosophy to top it off).

I'm sorry if the subject is misleading. I've never taken a class from you but I have studied your book in a few of my political science classes.

Today, I read your *Observations From 20 Years of Iowa Life* online. I laughed. I wept. I fumed. I nodded in agreement and in stubborn disbelief.

You should understand why. I may only, if at all, have a few years on your tenure as a 23 year old native in this schizophrenic state. Shudder if you will, but I'm from North-West Central Iowa.

Don't worry, I'm not writing in contest.

With the impression that you're not teaching in this state currently, I still feel the need to buy you coffee/tea/pop in exchange for a brief moment of your time if you're in Iowa City at all these Winter months. Why? To pick your brain a bit about Iowa, your career, and the meaning of life. (Just kidding about the last one, I swear I'm not as pretentious as I sound.)

If it helps or explains my motivation, think of me as an interested student with a few questions. If it helps, I can re-email you under my still-active University email and pretend I didn't graduate.

I realize your time is marginally more valuable than mine, so I appreciate you taking the time to even read this email.

At the very least, thank you for the frustrating article. I still don't know whether to pack up and move far, far away or proudly rant on a blog about how most Iowans don't like NASCAR and that outsiders just don't understand our temperament.

After all, NASCAR is a Southern thing. Right? Forget the Newton speedway... please...

Yours Truly,

[REDACTED] Iowan

Hi Mr. Bloom,

I read your article in The Atlantic and I want you to know that I really enjoyed it. It was so well-written and definitely captivated the essence of rural Iowa. I've seen on Facebook a lot of students aren't too fond of it (haters) but I want you to know that I really enjoyed it. Let me know if you're ever in town (I assume you'll be doing a lot of TV appearances after this one? jk) But seriously I would love to grab lunch!

All the best,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 21:41:50 -0600
Subject: friend, not foe
From: Amy Charles <amycharles1@gmail.com>
To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Hey Steve,

Fuck 'em. And congratulations on having tenure. I made the non-mistake of saying publicly a couple weeks ago that Iowa's not Georgetown (which I'd thought was, you know, obvious and inoffensive) and the shitstorm that ensued bagged two deans and a couple other high earners, ending in my losing a piddly at-will university post.

They're a little touchy. I see no reason to indulge it much.

Amy

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 20:06:11 -0800
Subject: a nice read
From: [REDACTED]
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Dear Mr. Bloom,

I found my way to your essay in The Atlantic today, through a friend on Facebook who was not pleased with your observations. We went to high school together in [REDACTED], Illinois and she went on to do her undergraduate studies at University of Iowa. She's now in Texas and fuming.

I spent a good hour reading and rereading the essay. I could not figure out what she was so angry about. I read through the comments. I could not figure out what anyone was so angry about. I guess Iowans interpret observations (good ones, I might add) as criticisms, when they clearly aren't. In fact, I saw a lot of fondness for the state in your piece.

[REDACTED] is not too far from the Iowa border, and as my father was a Ryder truck dealer I spent many hours on that road to Keokuk, driving trucks. I haven't been to Keokuk in years, but I imagine it hasn't changed much. I recognized a lot of the details in your piece as being true of where I grew up. I can't think of a single house I went to where we ever used the front door. In fact, the front door to our house, until only recently--for insurance purposes--, did not have steps up to it; the door perched very uselessly about three feet up from the ground. My favorite meal for most of my life was a casserole where the ingredients, in total, were 4 different cans of food. Stir and bake. My grandfather drove his riding lawnmower around town. My family lived in the country, where every summer you got stuck behind tractors. Once, my mother almost had a head on collision with a cow who had escaped the fence. Another time, we drove our 4-wheelers to herd our neighbors cattle off our yard. I remember very clearly ramming into those giant beasts. My parents must not have been worried we would accidentally be trampled.

I commented on my friend's FB link to your article, under all the Iowans' (or temporary ones, who have since moved on) who had posted angry comments. I asked, "Read more carefully. Aren't you seeing his point? How many of us have fled these small towns where we grew up?" No one has responded.

Anyway, this is all just to say that I thoroughly enjoyed your essay and found the details beautiful in their truth. My only point of contention--I think of the corn as *rustling* in those late summer months. :)

Thank you for writing.
Yours very sincerely,
[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 20:59:39 -0800
From: [REDACTED]
Reply-To: [REDACTED]
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

hey stephen! what an article! i'm sure you're being completely bombarded by every tom, dick and harry who wants to, due to the conservative and defensive nature of this state, spit on you. i have to say, and this is

coming from a "native", i loved the article and am thankful you were bold enough to write it.

i was home in ames for thanksgiving and was talking with my parents about how sad i thought the state of things were there, how the town had transformed since my childhood (seeing all the local places closed, stores boarded up, and not one, but two walmarts being some of the biggest sadnesses) and they thought i was wrong. so much for progress.

well, i could go on and on, but i wanted to drop you a line and say thanks for writing the hard stuff, hopefully it won't just be chronicled away and it will create a change. either way, you wrote something that made a LOT of people take pause and discuss, the thing all writers dream about.

██████████

Subject: Re: Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life

From: ██████████

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 23:29:21 -0600

To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

I enjoyed the "Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life" piece that you wrote for the Atlantic. I'm not sure what makes it controversial. Maybe other people need to develop some thicker skin.

From: ██████████

Subject: Re: Sullivan: Real observations from 20 years of Iowa life

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 06:03:05 -0600

To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Good luck. We hope your colleagues and friends are supportive. In our time, most deserted us--including family.

If not, Iowans have a long memory, but a short attention span. They will want to be "friends" again soon, even though they have done and said egregious things.

Concerning threats: I would not worry too much--most are cowards. However, I hope your children are grown. Iowans like to attack the weak link.

Finally, you have one important advantage: You are smarter than most all of your detractors.

████████████████████

*

██████████

o

Hi Stephen,

I've been reading all of the negative reactions on Facebook to your recent article in The Atlantic and just wanted to let you know I can relate to the backlash you're experiencing.

I've lived in Iowa my entire life and I can understand quite a few of the experiences you mention in the article.

Just wanted to let you know I read the article and found it interesting and well written. It does describe rural Iowa and although it may not be the most positive perspective, it is honest. Unfortunately, it seems that in today's current culture, honesty is often not well received. However, I feel that is the job of a true journalist and/or artist to present that honest perspective and I feel that in doing so you have upheld that responsibility.

Read your article and had to say kudos to you. Ignore the lash back, it's hard for people to hear the truth about themselves. I'm a native Iowan. I grew up on a farm and I couldn't agree more with what you've said.

It's a comfortable and quaint little word we Iowans live in, and it's those from the outside (or rather those who've come in and lived here from the outside) along with those who see differently, that need to stir up the pot every once in a while to get some things changed. Encouraging work and words.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Date: December 13, 2011 4:37:46 PM EST
To: <sgbloom@umich.edu>
Subject: LOVE IT!!

Professor - I love your Atlantic article. I'm a former Iowan, born and bred, that went to the U of IA and got out of town immediately after graduating. I would go one step further and say Iowa is a cesspool of passive aggressiveness like no place in the world. I've traveled to 50 countries and all major U.S. cities and never met a more truly negative and self-loathing group of people.

Anyway, I'm sure you're in for a torrent of hate mail and I'll bet Mitt Romney \$10,000.00 (that's a joke) there will be a call for your resignation. I'll go one step further again and bet you are now off Terry Branstad's "Holiday" card list. Regardless, when they try to filet you I'll be there to point out the nonsense of this and back you up 100%. Iowa needs more people like you and they'll probably try to drive you out of town. Hold firm.

[REDACTED]

Subject: Terrific piece in the Atlantic
From: [REDACTED] Add contact
To: sgbloom@umich.edu Add contact
Date: Tue 12:51 am

Hi Stephen,

Hope you are doing well.

Just finished your piece in the Atlantic. Really enjoyed it. Brought back a lot of memories.

Best,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Kudos on your article
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 10:58:19 -0600

Hi Steve,

Just wanted to send you a little positive news. My wife, [REDACTED], told me she heard the news on the radio this morning about the article you wrote for the Atlantic. I found the article and the comment by Kyle Munson a Des Moines Register columnist about the 'frightening' feedback you have received in regard to the Atlantic article.

I printed them both out and sent the links to our daughter and son-in-law in [REDACTED]. Then, I read them. [REDACTED] will read them later today when she gets home from work as the City Administrator/Clerk here in [REDACTED].

Our daughter and son-in-law graduated from the UI in [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] went to the Carver College of Medicine and graduated in [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] has just started his [REDACTED] year as a [REDACTED] resident at [REDACTED] in [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] is working remotely from their home for [REDACTED].

Here is [REDACTED] email:

"Hi Dad,

Someone posted about it on Facebook and it's rather startling to see how peoples' opinions vary on the topic. Pat and I read it and didn't find it particularly offensive. We thought it was well-written and spot-on. I think it's crazy that people can get so over-wrought about something like this. People seem to forget that this is Bloom's observation (as it clearly states in the title) even though he has bolstered his opinion with facts. Perhaps he over-generalized some parts, but all in all I thought it was a good article and he doesn't deserve this defamation.

Love,

██████████

I agree with ██████████ assessment. I have enjoyed your writings very much and this one was no exception. You told it like it is. I thought it was hilarious. Some people don't like themselves, the way they live, their culture, habits, etc., to be portrayed in the less-than-flattering light of day. I hope you write a book on the state of Iowa, in far greater detail than your article. I'm sure you have a lot of subject matter after visiting all 99 counties. You missed a great opportunity to comment on the re-election of Terry Brandstad which would shed more light on the way people think and do things here in Iowa. How in creation, (notice I didn't mention "God"), could a man who served 16 years as governor from 1983 to 1999 be re-elected to that same office in 2010? Maybe he'll still be serving after your book is written and published. That tells you a lot about the people in this state. You mentioned briefly the career politicians Grassley and Harkin but several chapters could be written about them. The description by Keith Olbermann of King doesn't go far enough either. I thought you were particularly kind and diplomatic of the "often-hardy" girls who vie for the title of County Fair Queen, Dairy Queen, and Pork Queen. You could have added that these "big-boned" girls also contend for Beef Queen and Beef, Pork and Dairy Princess.

If you are looking for a safe place to have a cup of coffee and visit, please come and see us here in ██████████. Maybe it is time to write that sequel on Postville and book on Iowa. :)

All the best.

██████████

From: ██████████
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Just read your piece, and I'm sure you'll need that Kevlar. One of my goals when writing stories about communities, people, change - and you have way more experience at it than me -- is that you try to show the subject(s) something they didn't already know about themselves. You did that with this article. A lot of people are going to get way pissed. I'm sure they already have. Let 'em. In some 3,500 words you encapsulated what Iowa truly is: tragic. Not in a pitiful or condescending sense. But in ways much more profound, and more importantly, compelling. Maybe that's why you continue to live in Iowa -- it's just too damned interesting to leave. Even though everyone else calls it boring.

(One more good thing: I love the purposeful delay of the last line. Everyone knew why you were writing the story, and that the piece lacked a cohesive nutgraf allowed a much more satisfying conclusion.)

Congrats on getting the Atlantic -- oh, hallowed jewel of freelance journalism.

██████████

From: ██████████
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 14:15:38 -0500
Subject: Re: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
X-Originating-IP: ██████████
x-aol-global-disposition: G
DKIM-Signature: ██████████
██████████
██████████
██████████
██████████
██████████
██████████
X-AOL-SCOLL-SCORE: ██████████
X-AOL-SCOLL-URL_COUNT: 0
x-aol-sid: ██████████

██████████ and I did enjoy it! We liked your observations, and it brought back memories of our first year in Iowa City (██████████). At that time Philip Roth wrote an article "Iowa, a place you just can't call home"

(or something like that) which appeared in *Esquire*. Among his observations, he talked about food so much is produced in Iowa, but restaurant choices are limited. Restaurants have long menus but virtually all offerings are steak. "And anyone, except for a small child or an Englishman can cook a steak." The best meals were in homes.....Iowa women by default have become better cooks than they intended to be. He also railed about campus cops and parking tickets.

Great job, Steve, especially the East-West political divide. A marvelous appraisal of Steve King!

I've not seen the recent *Press Citizen* which denounced your observations.

Enjoy Michigan, we look forward to seeing you when you return to Iowa City.

Warmest regards,

[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 15:58:17 -0600

Subject: Your article on Iowa--Praise

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Dr. Bloom,

I was born and raised in Iowa, growing up in [REDACTED]. I left the state in [REDACTED] and return to one of the small towns outside of [REDACTED] in [REDACTED].

I found your article to be very accurate as to what I have seen in the state. I think coming in from another state, I don't have the same bias as those who are sending you hate mail. I see the political divide between Eastern and Western Iowa and cannot understand how Stephen King got elected. As a non-Catholic, I find the discrimination that takes place daily in the area in and around [REDACTED] abhorrent. I didn't encounter that in [REDACTED] or even [REDACTED] when I was growing up.

My [REDACTED] year old mother has always said the smell of hog and cow manure was the smell of money. She still says it. I've heard it as long as I can remember.

In [REDACTED], I was always asked how living in the flatland was. Iowa is not flat as you so eloquently pointed out.

I'm happy that I am a graduate of [REDACTED] where I went to school with blacks and hispanics. I spent my career working with people who were different than me. Differences don't bother me. I am appalled by some of the things [REDACTED] says about [REDACTED] and how she is afraid to go downtown. She has lived around here for over [REDACTED] years and has totally forgotten about her high school years. I go to downtown [REDACTED] all the time and am not afraid.

With the exception of [REDACTED] my family has never traveled outside of the country. I have toured Europe several times. Most of my family have never even been on an airplane. My philosophy was that I wanted to see the world once I could afford it. I did and I'm glad for it. It taught me a lot about the world and opened my eyes to differences between people of different countries.

I don't understand the hate being directed at you. These people need to look inside themselves. The answer is there.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED] Iowa

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 16:08:54 -0600

Subject: The Atlantic article

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Stephen,

I am a lawyer in [REDACTED] Iowa, and a frequent visitor to Iowa City. (Football season ticket-holder for 14 years running, never missing a game.) I write for [REDACTED] and generally read everything I can get my hands on by either UI faculty or Writers' Workshop staff, students, and graduates. I thought your book, Postville, was simply genius and have read it several times. I have also recommended it to many friends and have given copies of it as Xmas gifts throughout the years. Your piece in The Atlantic was simply brilliant. [REDACTED] sent me the link this morning and I have forwarded it to several people. Your writing style is superb, as always, and your observations are very well-reasoned.

I read with great displeasure that you are receiving not only negative feedback, but feedback that makes you fear for your family. The small-mindedness of some (or a lot, it seems) is embarrassing for the state.

I wanted to let you know how much I enjoy your work and I pray for you and your family's safety during this difficult time. It's a shame that you are made to deal with this sort of thing for doing nothing more than writing your observations.

Best of luck for continued success and may you and your family enjoy the holiday season.

[REDACTED]

Stephen: Just picked up the Register and read with surprise and interest Kyle Munson's reaction to your article in The Atlantic; I then was compelled to read the complete piece in the magazine. Your observations are right on should be applauded by any honest observer. I also admire your guts to "tell it like it is." Happy Holidays to you and yours. ~ [REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 23:23:29 -0600

Subject: Great Piece

From: [REDACTED]

To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Steve,

Excellent piece in *The Atlantic* that presents the raw Iowa that is not usually discussed but needs to be.

Lunch or dinner when you return?

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

Subject: Have ya been pitchforked yet???

Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 12:18:04 -0500

Thread-Topic: Have ya been pitchforked yet???

Thread-Index: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

X-Proofpoint-Virus-Version: vendor=fsecure engine=[REDACTED]
definitions=[REDACTED]

It was one thing to upset the hasidim. But now, the cornfed, overall-wearing homers ...

Lookout!

[REDACTED]

Sent from my BlackBerry Wireless Handheld

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa



Attachments:

Easter front page 1993.pdf; Easter front page 1991.pdf; Easter front page 1992.pdf;
Easter front page 1994.pdf; Easter front page 1995.pdf; Easter front page 1996.pdf

X-SpamScore: 0

X-BigFish: VPS0(z68amzc85fhf01Mzz1202hzz8275bh8275dhz2fh793h2a8h668h839h34h)

X-Forefront-Antispam-Report:

CIP:65.55.171.153;KIP:(null);UIP:(null);IPV:NLI;H:VA3DIAHUB094.RED001.local;RD:smtp801.microsoftonline.com;EFVD:NLI

From: Lyle Muller <lyle.muller@thegazette.com>

To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 11:46:32 -0800

Subject: "He Is Risen"

Thread-Topic: "He Is Risen"

Thread-Index: Acy6mM0erO1t11upQ/epdMA33FtHVA==

Accept-Language: en-US

acceptlanguage: en-US

Steve,

You and I have talked about the "He is Risen" headline in the past and I've shared that a declaration that Jesus has risen is not front page news, but the headline doesn't show up in our archives in the span from 1986-1996 -- a span I had our library check to see if the year you report is off. Easter-related items (lilies, Bible verse in 1994) show up as markers of the day but not the headline. I won't burden you with years' past unless you want.

I question whether a moment in time from some years ago defines today's Iowa, and have a few other quarrels with your piece, as should be expected with so much out there. A lot of truths exist in the piece, too. Perhaps someday they'll get a fair airing.

Lyle Muller Editor, The Gazette

500 Third Ave. SE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52401

(319) 398-8210 or 1 (800) 397-8212 ext. 8210 Cell: (319) 389-6623

lyle.muller@thegazette.com

Blog: <http://thegazette.com/category/blogs/mulling-it-over>

News 24 hours a day: www.TheGazette.com

Content-Type: application/pdf; name="Easter front page 1993.pdf"

Content-Description: Easter front page 1993.pdf

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size=432184; creation-date="Wed, 14 Dec 2011 19:38:25 GMT";
modification-date="Wed, 14 Dec 2011 19:38:25 GMT"

Content-Type: application/pdf; name="Easter front page 1991.pdf"

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Content-Disposition: attachment; filename="Easter front page 1991.pdf";
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size=493728; creation-date="Wed, 14 Dec 2011 19:38:43 GMT";
modification-date="Wed, 14 Dec 2011 19:38:43 GMT"

[REDACTED]

>X-Yahoo-Newman-Id: [REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

>X-Yahoo-Newman-Property: ymail-3

>X-YMail-OSG: [REDACTED]

>X-Yahoo-SMTP: [REDACTED]

>X-rim-org-msg-ref-id: [REDACTED]

>Reply-To: [REDACTED]

>Sensitivity: Normal

>Subject: Hello Sir

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>, [REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 23:49:08 +0000

>

>I just read your article about your experiences here in Iowa. I too am
>not a native, and have resided here since 1998. The similarities
>however end there.

>

>I came from a place where hard work and hard play is part of life.
>Families are more important than social status or monetary gains.
>The outdoors and wildlife are a huge part of our culture, originally
>out of necessity, and now out of recreation and food supplementation.

>

>Starting in earnest in the early 1700's, my ancestors experienced
>racial, cultural, political and religious persecution. They were sold
>as property, shipped south, and many landed in Louisiana. The
>stereotypes, bias and persecution did not stop. At many times before
>the Civil War, my people were considered less valuable than the slaves
>that were beaten, tortured, sold, raped, and doomed to live miserable
>lives. During reconstruction, a great many northerners moved into the
>war ravaged state of Louisiana and did everything in their power to
>systematically stamp out all traces of a culture that existed there for
>110 years. A culture that was misunderstood as backward, heathen,
>uneducated, uncivilized. Cajuns were not slave holders. Nevertheless,
>they were persecuted by outsiders. This ultimately resulted in horrible
>stereotypes still that exist today.

>My mother and grand parents were not allowed to pass the cajun dialect
>on to their children for fear of persecution. The cajun dialect is only
>an oral language meaning a lapse of one generation can mean the death
>of it.

>

>Why do I give you a brief history of my state? A history that I'm sure
>you are aware of. Because I see a similar thread throughout your
>distasteful article. One that purposefully portrays Iowa's citizens as

>backward, slow speaking, mostly ignorant people. Your disparaging tone
>and frequent stereotypes sicken me. Your facts are thin, and your tone
>is snobbery.

>

>I am not defending the State of Iowa or it's citizens. They can do it
>themselves. I'm letting you know that as time goes on, and the
>"situation on the ground" changes, you sir will hold the minority point
>of view. Your views are not in the mainstream. Wake up.

>Nobody cares about the East and West Coast, except the East and the
>West Coast. Most of America IS rural. I understand that you are a
>product of your environment, but so are we. Liberalism is on the way
>out in this country, but don't get too down about it. I'm sure the
>people Iowa, the ones you do not understand and have no problems
>disparaging in the presence of your elitist coastal friends, will give
>you better treatment than you have given them.

>

>Sure some Iowans are "simple" by New York City standards, but what they
>hold dear in their hearts is what resides in more of your friends
>hearts than they would like to admit. Simple pleasures of family,
>friends, hard work, and sacrifice. No three hour commutes, no one
>million dollar apartments, no \$55 cheeseburgers, no danger of your
>mother getting raped while going to her car in the morning.
>Simple? Sure, call it what you want, but know that fewer people are
>listening, and fewer people are willing to carry your water.

>

>Good Day Sir,

>

>

>[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] IA

>Sent from my Verizon Wireless BlackBerry

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
d=gmail.com; s=gamma;
h=mime-version:from:date:message-id:subject:to:content-type;
bh=gtLhbWfUIDDy78Gz3SaQdF30wtPgEU+qIbJns7r2fNs=;
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vLTVlbpPIDGAoOp/2zYZrItea3eCO0AScM+HY=

From: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 17:51:44 -0500

Subject: Hey there

To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Can you call me? Thanks! (202)904-5413

--

<http://twitter.com/thegarance>

>From: "Kilen, Mike" <mkilen@desmoine.gannett.com>
>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 09:36:15 -0700
>Subject: HI
>Thread-Topic: HI
>Thread-Index: Acy6fn/EEhv7OfXwSVatzAZ6pTJLLw==
>Accept-Language: en-US
>acceptlanguage: en-US
>
>Hi Stephen,
>Wow, you made the front page! "Iowa man too negative on Iowa" Seems you
>sparked a conversation. How dare you.
>
>I was wondering if we could continue the conversation a bit, in the
>week following Christmas (Dec 27 or 28). My task, as assigned, is my
>3rd Caucus season installment of an essay on "Iowa's image" Perhaps you
>could supply a quote, or thought or two. If so let me know a time and
>number to call.
>
>Thanks
>
>Mike Kilen
>Feature Writer
>Des Moines Register
>715 Locust St.
>Des Moines IA 50309
>Office: 515-284-8361
>Cell: 515-7709-9037
>Email: mkilen@dmreg.com
>

From: [REDACTED]
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Hunting Land Lease (Illinois)
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 00:16:27 -0800

[REDACTED] has forwarded you this craigslist.org posting.

Please see below for more information.

Visit the posting at <http://quadcities.craigslist.org/wan/2750849120.html> to contact the person who posted this.

Hunting Land Lease

Date: 2011-12-13, 9:44AM

Wanting to lease land for whitetail deer hunting in Franklin, Hamilton, or Jefferson County. Small or large tracts. We will manage your land for better hunting in the future and keep people from trespassing on your land. We are insured so do not worry about liability.

- Location: Illinois
- it's NOT ok to contact this poster with services or other commercial interests

Original URL: <http://quadcities.craigslist.org/wan/2750849120.html>

this craigslist posting was forwarded to you by someone using our email-a-friend feature - if you want to prevent these, please go to:

http://www.craigslist.org/cgi-bin/te/U2FsdGVkX18yMDc1NDIwN1wG-SIUOGliziFrsgGh4KOSoHceavWXx51CeOxBHrO_EpOt4ykK5INU24gtMCe7pQ

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED]

>Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 22:57:21 -0600

>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>I have been stuck in Cedar Rapids six years now, merely because it's

>the only job available within a 20 hour drive of my family. Every time

>I meet someone new at work and they find out I am single, their next

>words are "If you don't want to die single and alone, get out while you

>still can". I am sorry you have received so much backlash for your

>portrayal that is oh so familiar of my own travels of Iowa, always

>searching and finding there really is nothing left. Unless of course

>you live to hunt and fish and procreate 'in his honor'.

>Best wishes and happy holidays

>

>

>Sent from my iPhone

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]
>X-Originating-Email: [REDACTED]
>Subject: I LOVE YOU!
>From: [REDACTED]
>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 22:40:58 -0600
>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>
>Professor Bloom:
>
>I've spent the past several hours defending & debating your very honest
>opinion piece about Iowa on my Facebook page.
>
>Like your very enlightening book about your experiences in Postville,
>this piece doesn't disappoint!
>
>I just told my daughter who is a freshman at UI, to do whatever she can
>to get into one of your classes.
>
>You are a breath of fresh air my friend & I look forward to your future
>writings.
>
>P.S. You're in my native Michigan & I'm so jealous! Enjoy!
>
>My Best,
[REDACTED] Iowa
>
>
>Sent from my iPhone

--
Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan
Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

>X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]
>From: [REDACTED]
>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: I want to share this with you regarding your wonderful piece
>in the
> Atlantic
>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:44:41 +0000
>
>my music and poetry blog at [REDACTED] is a must read for
>you, as I am also a transplant to Iowa but from Missouri, [REDACTED]
>to be exact. I am a descendant of the Reorganized Latter Day Saints
>church which settled there, and I am now an atheist revolutionary
>socialist, unaffiliated with a party. My poetry has won awards at Iowa
>State and the UK blog [REDACTED] I know you will
>like it because it speaks the same language as your essay, only from an
>insider who speaks from within the Midwestern ethos rather than from
>outside. Enjoy. and or let me know what you think. I've lived in Iowa
>since 1982.
>
>Sincerely,
> [REDACTED]
>

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:25:22 -0500
>To: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>
>From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Fwd: Inanity
>Cc:
>Bcc:
>X-Attachments:
>
>>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>>From: [REDACTED]
>>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 16:06:20 -0600
>>Subject: Inanity
>>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>>
>>You are full of it.

>>
>>I read your recent article. I am one of the "export" young adults to
>>whom you refer, a grad of the university whose payroll you were on up
>>to this year, and I am aghast at your lack of knowledge of the state.
>>That article is full of things you clearly made up, from your
>>inaccurate but easily verified data regarding the ethnic makeup of the
>>state (census data, which likely does not include the state's growing
>>Hispanic population, shows 91.3% white, not 96% white--this took me 5
>>seconds to find on Google, and I'm disgusted that neither you nor the
>>magazine's editors bothered to find out) to your ridiculous anecdotes
>>relating to your dog (which I do not for a minute believe occurred in
>>the university town you lived in) to your blithe ignorance about the
>>state's religious makeup (of COURSE there are Hindus; there is a
>>temple barely a half-mile north of the capital). I am frankly shocked
>>that you have expressed surprise about the backlash you have received.
>>Any freshman Rhetoric student could have told you that collecting a
>>long list of baseless stereotypes is not either responsible journalism
>>or a legitimate method of raising questions about a state's future.
>>
>>It appears you have far too much time on your hands to create new and
>>interesting stereotypes to help people on the coasts make fun of the
>>farmers who pay your salary. You are quite welcome leave, perhaps to
>>stay at Michigan, where you seem to have plenty of leisure time. I
>>will be writing several higher-ups at the University to recommend that
>>they make it clear how very welcome you are to do so.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 16:06:20 -0600

>Subject: Inanity

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

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>be writing several higher-ups at the University to recommend that they

>make it clear how very welcome you are to do so.

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 20:44:29 -0600

Subject: Inquiry from former student

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Professor Bloom,

My name is [REDACTED] I'm a fresh alumnus of Iowa with degrees in English and Political Science (a minor in Philosophy to top it off).

I'm sorry if the subject is misleading. I've never taken a class from you but I have studied your book in a few of my political science classes.

Today, I read your *Observations From 20 Years of Iowa Life* online. I laughed. I wept. I fumed. I nodded in agreement and in stubborn disbelief.

You should understand why. I may only, if at all, have a few years on your tenure as a 23 year old native in this schizophrenic state. Shudder if you will, but I'm from [REDACTED] Iowa.

Don't worry, I'm not writing in contest.

With the impression that you're not teaching in this state currently, I still feel the need to buy you coffee/tea/pop in exchange for a brief moment of your time if you're in Iowa City at all these Winter months. Why? To pick your brain a bit about Iowa, your career, and the meaning of life. (Just kidding about the last one, I swear I'm not as pretentious as I sound.)

If it helps or explains my motivation, think of me as an interested student with a few questions. If it helps, I can re-email you under my still-active University email and pretend I didn't graduate.

I realize your time is marginally more valuable than mine, so I appreciate you taking the time to even read this email.

At the very least, thank you for the frustrating article. I still don't know whether to pack up and move far, far away or proudly rant on a blog about how most Iowans don't like NASCAR and that outsiders just don't understand our temperament.

After all, NASCAR is a Southern thing. Right? Forget the Newton speedway... please...

Yours Truly,

[REDACTED] Iowan

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: Katherine Perkins <kperkins@iowapublicradio.org>
To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 13:09:36 -0500
Subject: Interview on IPR
Thread-Topic: Interview on IPR
Thread-Index: Acy4+TVCfta2JvL7R6qH8WhVHVthDA=
Accept-Language: en-US
acceptlanguage: en-US

Stephen -

I am one of the producers for Iowa Public Radio's talk shows. Our staff read, with interest, your article in *The Atlantic*. We wanted to offer you an opportunity to discuss it on Talk of Iowa. Would you be willing?

Katherine Perkins | Producer | Iowa Public Radio
710 S. Clinton St. | Iowa City, IA 52242
T 319.384.0908 | M 515.291.1763 | kperkins@iowapublicradio.org

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 15:34:07 -0600

Subject: Iowa Article

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Professor Bloom,

I am writing in response to your recent article about the state of Iowa in *The Atlantic*. I am from Iowa and a recent graduate of the University of Iowa and the Adler School of Journalism ([REDACTED]). Based upon the media attention that this article has received by the local media I am sure you are receiving a few messages on the subject. As opposed to many of the messages you may be receiving I am not a bitter Iowan angered simply by your description or categorization of the state. Instead I question your journalism in writing an article that was so closely framed as to only serve as a 'straw-man' argument for your view on the state of Iowa.

The images that you paint of rural small-town Iowa are certainly correct. I can attest to their validity from my experience as a football play-by-play announcer calling high school games in towns with populations that teeter below 1,000 people and are most probably outnumbered by livestock. Towns where meat is served on a stick and pancake socials before games serve as media pressers and production meetings. Towns with main streets that serve as visuals for economic depression and people who seem enclosed not only physically but also mentally and culturally from the rest of the nation.

This is indeed an element of the state, but it is not the overall picture of it. You fail to describe in any detail the cities of Iowa, and there are cities. You opt instead to simply use them as references for population. No mention of the technological corridor from Cedar Rapids to Iowa City. No mention that buildings rise over and dominate corn in several cities. No mention of the thriving cultural and arts scene in Iowa City or Cedar Rapids. Cedar Rapids is home to the Cedar Rapids Museum of Art, the National Czech & Slovak Museum & Library, the Paramount Theatre, Theatre Cedar Rapids, and the Iowa Cultural Corridor Alliance. The Mother Mosque of America, located in Cedar Rapids, is the longest standing mosque in North America. You describe 'skuzzy' river towns inhabited by rural whites yet fail to mention pockets of severe economic depression in cities such as Cedar Rapids and Des Moines where violence and crime is prevalent and the inhabitants are not silky white, but their problems are just as severe and just as urgent. Neighborhoods like Moundview and Wellington Heights in Cedar Rapids, where recently three people were shot in the span of a week. You neglect these facts and images to instead focus a narrow scope on rural Iowa.

I could continue with several other facts and points of reference but for the sake of brevity I'll keep it to that. Your article doesn't disappoint me most as an Iowan but as a journalist. You describe the article as a description of what Iowa *is*. You then proceed to wallow in territory that has already been covered and meander over facts that many around the nation already know of not only rural Iowa but the rural U.S. as a whole. You had the opportunity, with this article, to illuminate parts of the state that aren't as widely publicized or covered because they don't fit into the stereotype of what a rural state is thought to be. Instead you chartered old territory and only served to perpetuate an image of the state that is true in parts but not in whole. We are taught upon inception into the journalistic fraternity that facts are paramount and narrow scopes produce narrow stories. There is an entire course at the University of Iowa taught by your colleague Frank Durham centered around the issue of framing in journalism and the need to identify it

and avoid it. Your article could serve as a prime example for that course.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:22:13 -0500
>To: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>
>From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Fwd: Iowa Message-from [REDACTED]

>Cc:

>Bcc:

>X-Attachments:

>

>>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 13:14:56 -0600

>>From: [REDACTED]


>>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>>Subject: Iowa Message-from [REDACTED]

>>X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]

>>


>>YOU SOB---what is your problem--if you dislike IOWA so much--get your
>>ass out. Someone in your position should not be speaking the way you
>>do about the state so many of us love .A lot of us have risked our
>>lives and some have given their lives so you talk that way. But that
>>doesn't mean we won't kick your ASS in front of all your family if you
>>keep it up.



>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 13:14:56 -0600

>From: 

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>Subject: Iowa Message-from 

>X-Originating-IP: 

>

>YOU SOB---what is your problem--if you dislike IOWA so much--get your
>ass out. Someone in your position should not be speaking the way you do
>about the state so many of us love .A lot of us have risked our lives
>and some have given their lives so you talk that way. But that doesn't
>mean we won't kick your ASS in front of all your family if you keep it
>up.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 21:42:43 -0700

>Subject: Iowa

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Wow, if you hate Iowa so much, why don't you just move back to
>California, where there's a broken budget, mass pollution,
>irresponsible domestic water use, crime, etc. Personally, I'd never
>live in a place that I thought sucks so bad, why do you spend twenty
>years in a place that you despise? Your article is misled and
>irresponsible for someone who teaches journalism. You're offended when
>people say Merry Christmas, yet it's somehow acceptable for you to
>simultaneously slander all the citizens of one state? Well Merry
>Christmas to you, sir. I'll laugh when you get canned from your job
>for this stunt.

>

>

>--

[REDACTED]

>

>

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

>X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]
>From: [REDACTED]
>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Iowa
>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 13:33:28 -0600

>
>Dear Mr. Bloom,
>
>I recently read your article "Observations from 20 years of Iowa life"
>and am completely disgusted by it. You are a horrible person to be able
>to twist so many admirable traits about Iowa into vulgar phrases. If
>you would have removed your head from your pompous ass while living in
>Iowa, you would have realized how wonderful Iowa is and the people
>living in it. I also have to say that I fully intend to continue living
>in this great state, even though I am not elderly, timid, uneducated (I
>have my PhD in engineering), or a meth addict.

>
>Sincerely,

> [REDACTED]
>

[REDACTED]

>X-Yahoo-Newman-Property: ymail-3

>X-Yahoo-Newman-Id: [REDACTED]

>

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 13:10:45 -0800

>From: [REDACTED]

>Reply-To: [REDACTED]

>Subject: Iowa

>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>



>

>Please never come back to Iowa. You dont deserve to be here.

>

>Sincerely,

> [REDACTED]



>From: "Rohrbeck, Nicholas A" <nicholas-rohrbeck@uiowa.edu>
>To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Iowa.
>Thread-Topic: Iowa.
>Thread-Index: Acy6ml6pevDEnsOYStu0W5SSavxs/A==
>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 13:55:46 -0600
>Accept-Language: en-US
>
>I won't be the first to say this, and I probably won't be the last.
>I'll at least be kind about it...
>
>You, sir, are a complete moron.
>
>Good day.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:24:17 -0500
>To: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>
>From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Fwd: Iowa
>Cc:
>Bcc:
>X-Attachments:
>
>>X-Yahoo-Newman-Property: ymail-3
>>X-Yahoo-Newman-Id: [REDACTED]
>>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 13:10:45 -0800
>>From: [REDACTED]
>>Reply-To: [REDACTED]
>>Subject: Iowa
>>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>>
>>Please never come back to Iowa. You dont deserve to be here.
>>
>>Sincerely,
>> [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:24:17 -0500
>To: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>
>From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Fwd: Iowa
>Cc:
>Bcc:
>X-Attachments:
>
>>X-Yahoo-Newman-Property: ymail-3
>>X-Yahoo-Newman-Id: [REDACTED]
>>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 13:10:45 -0800
>>From: [REDACTED]
>>Reply-To: [REDACTED]
>>Subject: Iowa
>>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>>
>>Please never come back to Iowa. You dont deserve to be here.
>>
>>Sincerely,
>> [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:23:25 -0500
>To: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>
>From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Fwd: Iowa
>Cc:
>Bcc:
>X-Attachments:

>
>>X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]
>>From: [REDACTED]
>>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>>Subject: Iowa
>>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 13:33:28 -0600

>>
>>Dear Mr. Bloom,
>>

>>I recently read your article "Observations from 20 years of Iowa life"
>>and am completely disgusted by it. You are a horrible person to be
>>able to twist so many admirable traits about Iowa into vulgar phrases.
>>If you would have removed your head from your pompous ass while living
>>in Iowa, you would have realized how wonderful Iowa is and the people
>>living in it. I also have to say that I fully intend to continue
>>living in this great state, even though I am not elderly, timid,
>>uneducated (I have my PhD in engineering), or a meth addict.

>>
>>Sincerely,
>>[REDACTED]
>>

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 08:55:02 -0500
>To: gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com
>From: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: iowa, of al places
>Cc:
>Bcc:
>
>g,
>was wondering whether you've put the piece up yet....thx...s
>
>--
>Stephen G. Bloom
>
>Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of
>Communication Studies University of Michigan
>
>Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of
>Journalism The University of Iowa

--
Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: Warren L Lerude <wlerude@unr.edu>
>To: j faculty <jfaculty@lists.unr.edu>
>CC: Warren L Lerude <wlerude@unr.edu>, Solnit Rebecca
> [REDACTED], Joseph N Crowley <crowley@unr.edu>, Bloom
>Stephen
> [REDACTED] <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 17:42:01 -0800
>Subject: Iowa--thru Steve Bloom's view
>Thread-Topic: Iowa--thru Steve Bloom's view
>Thread-Index: Acy3phSeKX3NMeOjTA61IR/KRGylxg==
>Accept-Language: en-US
>acceptlanguage: en-US
>X-Proofpoint-Virus-Version: vendor=fsecure
>engine=2.50.10432:5.5.7110,1.0.211,0.0.0000
> definitions=2011-12-11_01:2011-12-09,2011-12-11,1970-01-01
>signatures=0
>X-Proofpoint-Spam-Details: rule=notspam policy=default score=0
>spamscore=0 ipscore=0 suspectscore=1
> phishscore=0 bulkscore=0 adultscore=0 classifier=spam adjust=0
>reason=mlx
> scancount=1 engine=6.0.2-1012030000 definitions=main-1112100331
>
>J Faculty (Rebecca): 2010 Distinguished Laxalt Writer Steve Bloom has
>an interesting take on Iowa culture and presidential politics in
>current edition of The Atlantic--The Soul of Iowa--from a San Francisco
>transplant of 20 years vintage in the Midwest.
>
>Steve: Interesting. This could cause you to run for the hills--if
>there are any...
>
>Best, Warren

--
Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 01:46:28 -0500

Subject: Israeli-Iowan response to your article

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Hello Professor Bloom,

I am sure you are feeling the backlash but I have to be honest: you really deserve it. I grew up in [REDACTED] from the age of 8 and my mother is the first [REDACTED] of black origin in the history of [REDACTED]. I chose to go to the University of Iowa although I could have attended several other private liberal-arts colleges. I am also Israeli, have never detassled corn, have never even heard of a Tractor Pull or a Combine Derby, and one of my best friends is a Hindu-American gay boy from Chicago. His uncle and aunt live in [REDACTED] as do many of his cousins. In fact, there are actually many Hindus in the state of Iowa, or did you not visit the Maharishi University in Fairfield?

I will close with a comment a friend (and fellow Iowa alumni) made on Facebook:

This guy doesn't get it. It's not the issues he raised in the article. Those are serious issues that should be tackled. I don't think anyone is going after him because he is bringing these issues to light (though he'd like to think so, as if he were some rural Bob Woodward). People don't like what he says because he says things like a condescending ass would. He uses glib generalizations to pander to elitist Atlantic readers. Perhaps rather than warning kids about the horrors of wishing "Merry Christmas" he should warn his them about using hackneyed and myopic stereotypes when presenting problems.

Interestingly, after spending a year in Israel after college and the last 16 months in NYC obtaining my graduate degree, I am choosing of my own accord to return to Iowa. Why? Because people are respectful, because I can leave my keys in my car when I run into Casey's, because I enjoy waving at strangers and having strangers wave back; because I appreciate other liberal-minded people who will fight for gay marriage; because being Jewish-Israeli and half black is considered exotic; because I have heard just as much racism in New York and Israel as I have going to school at Iowa, yet I still call this state my home. For living in Iowa City (which is NOT rural-- and which makes me wonder you deliberately omitted how most Iowans actually live in urban areas, NOT rural one), you seem to have only soaked in the ethnocentrically inaccurate stereotypes that many East and West coast elitists propagate. You can't seriously be shocked Iowans would not react to this so-called piece of "journalism." You make it a point that you have your students back up their information with two other sources-- where are your other sources? I hope this is an eye-opening experience for you.

Respectfully, [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]



--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED]
>To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Kudos on your article
>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 10:58:19 -0600

>

>Hi Steve,

>

>Just wanted to send you a little positive news. My wife, [REDACTED]
>told me she heard the news on the radio this morning about the article
>you wrote for the Atlantic. I found the article and the comment by
>Kyle Munson a Des Moines Register columnist about the 'frightening'
>feedback you have received in regard to the Atlantic article.

>

>I printed them both out and sent the links to our daughter and
>son-in-law in North Carolina. Then, I read them. [REDACTED] will read
>them later today when she gets home from work as the City
>Administrator/Clerk here in [REDACTED]

>

>Our daughter and son-in-law graduated from the UI in 2005. [REDACTED] went to
>the Carver College of Medicine and graduated in 2010. [REDACTED] has just
>started [REDACTED] year as a [REDACTED] resident at [REDACTED]
>[REDACTED] in [REDACTED]. [REDACTED] is working remotely from their
>home for [REDACTED]

>

>Here is [REDACTED] email:

>

>"Hi Dad,

>Someone posted about it on Facebook and it's rather startling to see
>how peoples' opinions vary on the topic. [REDACTED] and I read it and didn't
>find it particularly offensive. We thought it was well-written and
>spot-on. I think it's crazy that people can get so over-wrought about
>something like this. People seem to forget that this is Bloom's
>observation (as it clearly states in the title) even though he has
>bolstered his opinion with facts. Perhaps he over-generalized some
>parts, but all in all I thought it was a good article and he doesn't
>deserve this defamation.

>Love,

>[REDACTED]

>

>I agree with [REDACTED] assessment. I have enjoyed your writings very
>much and this one was no exception. You told it like it is. I thought
>it was hilarious. Some people don't like themselves, the way they
>live, their culture, habits, etc., to be portrayed in the
>less-than-flattering light of day. I hope you write a book on the
>state of Iowa, in far greater detail than your article. I'm sure you
>have a lot of subject matter after visiting all 99 counties. You
>missed a great opportunity to comment on the re-election of Terry
>Brandstad which would shed more light on the way people think and do
>things here in Iowa. How in creation, (notice I didn't mention "God"),
>could a man who served 16 years as governor from 1983 to 1999 be
>re-elected to that same office in 2010? Maybe he'll still be serving
>after your book is written and published. That tells you a lot about
>the people in this state.

>You mentioned briefly the career politicians Grassley and Harkin but
>several chapters could be written about them. The description by Keith
>Olbermann of King doesn't go far enough either. I thought you were
>particularly kind and diplomatic of the "often-hardy" girls who vie for

>the title of County Fair Queen, Dairy Queen, and Pork Queen.

>You could have added that these "big-boned" girls also contend for Beef

>Queen and Beef, Pork and Dairy Princess.

>

>If you are looking for a safe place to have a cup of coffee and visit,

>please come and see us here in [REDACTED] Maybe it is time to write that

>sequel on Postville and book on Iowa. :)

>

>All the best.

>

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>X-Yahoo-Newman-Property: ymail-3

>X-Yahoo-Newman-Id: [REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 13:08:53 -0800

>From: [REDACTED]

>Reply-To: [REDACTED]

>Subject: Lets have a beer/coffee

>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Hi there,

>

>My name is [REDACTED] from Cedar Falls/Waterloo. My girlfriend sent

>me the article that you wrote in the Atlantic and I see that particular

>piece has garnered you some attention, most of it seeming to be the

>unwanted kind. I'll cut to the chase: I'll be in town up here or,

>hell, I'll even make the drive down there (to I.C. or

>C.R.) and meet you if you'd like to have a beer or a coffee.

>

>"Why?" you ask?

>

>A couple of reasons really. For one thing, when I read your article I

>found myself getting angry with you. At the same time I found myself

>begrudgingly agreeing with some of what you said, although not so much

>to the extremes it was presented. I think I was able to pick up on

>your satire but I'm honestly not sure. In other words, as a life-long

>Iowan I disagree with you about most of what I read. In a general idea

>of Iowa being in decline, I resentfully have to agree.

>

>Another thing is that I feel your article is devoid of any hope.

>The hope that is the people who are Iowans. I think I took particular

>issue when you said Iowa doesn't represent much.

>I remembered how we went through the floods of 2008, a flood that came

>through my hometown, and how we didn't loot, didn't rob each other, and

>didn't fight about who to help first. We all just helped each other.

>We're a state of four seasons, smart people, and common sense. ANYone

>should be proud of those things...or at the least one should enjoy all

>the seasons! I wanted to lash out at you and call you an east coast

>snob using west coast liberalism to paint an ugly picture of my beloved

>state from a throne made of privilege.

>Then I read some of your responses to the reaction you had gotten and

>decided that you were probably none of those things (although I still

>wanted to fit a crack in about the east coast but couldn't quite conjure

>one up...). I thought it was important that someone invite you to talk

>about what you wrote. Not that you need anyone to voice your thought
>to and if you wanted them going public, I certainly wouldn't be the
>person to sit with. I am not famous nor am I incredibly successful. I
>have a fair number of very good friends but I'm not anyone who has the
>capacity to help anyone's cause, other than having an ear to bend. To
>be honest, I think you raise a few good points and I'm fascinated with
>your views. I don't like it, but I'm fascinated with it and for my own
>selfish motivation to satisfy my intellectualism I can't help but want
>to talk to you about it. I also feel it's important that someone reach
>out to you in this fashion and stand up for the rest of us who DO think
>and encourage opinion, even the ones we don't like.

>

>I am not a murderer nor will I be armed should you choose to take me up
>on this invitation. I am a simple industrial supply salesman who just
>can't help but extend the invitation and see what happens. I have
>never done this before but I couldn't help but feel my heart strings
>being pulled at by your article. I have a great love of this state and
>I figured before I come unglued about what I read, I may as well talk
>to the source, as unlikely or crazy as that may be.
>There will be absolutely nothing in it for you other than possibly the
>entertainment of dis-proving everything I say about how great Iowa is,
>or maybe finding out that I'm not such a door knob as I've made myself
>out to be and having some stimulating conversation. For me, I'll just
>get a chance to say some great stuff about my state and find out what
>you really think. After all, if Iowa was so bad I figure you would
>have just packed up and left long before you spent
>20 years here. Please excuse any typos in here, I clepped out of
>english in college but it wasn't because I was great wth spelling or
>punctuation.

>

>I look forward to hearing from you,

>

>

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 08:38:50 -0600

Subject: Liked "the article" in Atlantic Monthly

From: [REDACTED]

To: <sgbloom@iowa.uiowa.edu>

Professor Bloom,

I just read your insightful, thoughtful article in the *Atlantic Monthly*. A native Iowan (born and raised in [REDACTED]) I was neither insulted nor angered by your article but rather dismayed by many of your accurate descriptions about the state of my home state. In recent months, I have often commented that the Iowa primaries are a bizarre chapter in the American political process in that Iowa is far from being a microcosm of our country.

And, I'm glad my tax dollars (I work very hard for not a lot of money teaching in a high school) pay your salary. Clearly, you challenge your students to think.

Having lived in either a substantial Iowa town or city most of my life, I'd like to suggest an idea for your next project (IF you plan to continue your examination of the Iowa persona). Head to the state's small cities where a vastly different culture exists compared with the rural Iowa you present in the article.

Thank you for a good, rather sobering, read that gave me much to ponder in this "holiday season."



[REDACTED]

--



Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa



>From: "Perlmutter, David D" <david-perlmutter@uiowa.edu>
>To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Lots of calls coming in!
>Thread-Topic: Lots of calls coming in!
>Thread-Index: Acy5JostvVbS8DrpTrGvwkLYROQvBQ==
>Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 17:34:08 -0600
>Accept-Language: en-US
>
>
>
>Best wishes, DDP
>
>David D. Perlmutter, Ph.D.
>Director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication Professor &
>Starch Faculty Fellow College of Liberal Arts & Sciences The University
>of Iowa
>319.384.3383
>david-perlmutter@uiowa.edu
>
>[Sent from my iPad]



From: Stephen Bloom <sgbloom@umich.edu>
Subject: Fwd: Loved your piece on Iowa
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 13:16:47 -0500
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Begin forwarded message:

Stephen:

As a former Midwesterner, I loved reading your piece on Iowa and politics.

I grew up in central Illinois and worked in western Illinois near the Quad Cities before moving West. I also went to a summer camp in Iowa multiple years and had plenty of interactions with Iowans.

They're nice folks, but I thought your piece was fair and a good read.

Best,



DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
d=gmail.com; s=gamma;
h=mime-version:from:date:message-id:subject:to:content-type;
bh=CwQ/ngRifGg3xL57u5Z60f9czJHpLcg1Nibm/wfau8o=;
b=xBSHgwXU2q4vu4IWPLv578ExLfTglBusM5NLymWXjUT+aE5AbZVZ+QRyveskNcAhYo
IJWgmzmZ5E4aCf7SRnZhdBTV+U1xI0objbMJ0K+rv7rsM0Z8NL8niKxAEkg43X1VwwAJ0
LCKqb5uxYN0Du3UFPPibbpqpKzn2jBW7hQ/L0=
From: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>
Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 07:54:29 -0500
Subject: More corrections
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Hi Stephen,

More factual challenges to your report have come to light and I am going to need you to address these:

- 1) Turkey hunting with rifles -- some are saying that hunting them with rifles is not permitted under Iowa law. Can you confirm what guns are allowed for such hunts?
- 2) Many say there is no such thing as "red Waldorf cake" -- did you mean red velvet?
- 3) I am told there are fewer than 200,000 milk cows in Iowa, the rest being cattle. Holsteins are milk cows, and there are not millions of them in the state. When you wrote, "Rural America has always been homogenous, as white as the milk the millions of Holstein cows here produce" were you intending to speak of Iowa?

Thanks,
Garance

--

<http://twitter.com/thegarance>

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

>From: "Munson, Kyle" <kmunson@desmoine.gannett.com>
>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 09:04:15 -0700
>Subject: Munson from The Register
>Thread-Topic: Munson from The Register
>Thread-Index: Acy457H88IHf+CTaEeG/HwAX8tQdfA==
>Accept-Language: en-US
>acceptlanguage: en-US
>
>Stephen --
>
> Happy holidays from Iowa! Your Atlantic piece has stirred the pot
>when it comes to Iowa caucus-time assessments, to say the least. Would
>you have some time on the phone to chat about this today? Definitely
>plays into a wealth of topics I cover in my column from week to week.
> Best,
>
>--
>Kyle Munson
>Iowa columnist
>The Des Moines Register
>715 Locust St.
>Des Moines, IA 50309
>Mobile: 515.314.0416
>Office: 515.284.8124
>Columns - DesMoinesRegister.com/Munson
>Blog - DesMoinesRegister.com/KyleMunson Twitter - @KyleMunson Facebook
>and YouTube - /kylemunsonsiowa

Attachments:

IMG_0008.JPG

>From: [REDACTED]
>To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: My dog's name is [REDACTED]
>Thread-Topic: My dog's name is [REDACTED]
>Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 13:17:32 -0600
>Accept-Language: en-US
>
>Hey, Stephen-- (I elected not to call you "Professor" because I will
>never be taking a course from you)
>
>My name is [REDACTED] and I was born and raised in Iowa. I am an Iowa law
>student, and my tuition helps support you and your family.
>
>Last December my wife and I bought a puppy and named him [REDACTED].
>We got the dog because we thought we might just want to walk with the
>dog or to throw a ball for him to fetch. Never once has [REDACTED]
>tracked and bagged animals to stuff, mount, or eat. (I attached a
>picture of [REDACTED] so you could see the vicious killer yourself.)
>
>My wife and I have lived in Iowa City for only 18 months, but not once
>have we attended church here. (I'm not sure I know a single person in
>Iowa City that attends church, as a matter of fact.)
>
>My father, also an Iowa resident, is 59 years old. I don't recall ever
>seeing him wear a hat.
>
>Tractor pulls every Friday night? That's bogus and you know it. I
>have 3 uncles who are farmers in [REDACTED] Iowa. Even they don't attend
>tractor pulls. Nor do they hunt turkeys with rifles. After all,
>that's illegal in the state of Iowa.
>
>You write as if you're being objective, but you're making value
>judgments at every turn.
>
>You're very much out of touch with reality. ("Tears of Mermaids: The
>Secret Story of Pearls." LOL. C'mon, man.)
>
>I'm going to go watch Jersey Shore now and learn about YOUR place of origin.
>
>Regards,
>[REDACTED]
>
>p.s. So THAT'S what your foot tastes like, eh?
>
>
>
>
>Content-Type: image/jpeg; name="IMG_0008.JPG"
>Content-Description: IMG_0008.JPG
>Content-Disposition: attachment; filename="IMG_0008.JPG"; size=982438;
> creation-date="Wed, 14 Dec 2011 13:05:27 GMT";
> modification-date="Wed, 14 Dec 2011 13:05:27 GMT"
>

From: [REDACTED]
To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: My Iowa
Thread-Topic: My Iowa
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 18:20:21 -0600
Accept-Language: en-US

Dear Professor Bloom,

My name is [REDACTED] and I'm a [REDACTED]-year medical student at the University of Iowa, [REDACTED] Iowa graduate with honors in English, and native of Dubuque, Iowa. I wanted to write you to respectfully disagree with many of the points you made in your recent article in The Atlantic.

I wonder if you've ever traveled to Dubuque, a town recently featured in a BBC News segment for "reinventing itself," (<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/magazine-15849841>) a town where the Mississippi River is not strewn solely with beer cans and where many a boat, jet ski or water skier can be found skimming its surface on warm summer afternoons. Certainly, if you'd been to Dubuque recently, you would have heard about how IBM, Dubuque city planners and University of Iowa are partnering to make it a 'smart city,' an example of sustainability and energy conservation. Or maybe you would have spoken to my father, [REDACTED] a life-long resident of Iowa who is a proud citizen of both Dubuque and Iowa. Or you might have encountered my mother [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] [REDACTED] who are dedicated teachers in the Dubuque Community School System and committed to providing the same type of quality education that I enjoyed and that provided me with the many opportunities I have today. Certainly, if you would have done any of these things, you would not have called the river towns along the Mississippi some of the "scuzziest" you've ever seen. Because your Iowa, Mr. Bloom is not my Iowa.

My parents grew up on a farm and much of my extended family still lives in rural Iowa. They aren't elderly waiting to die. They aren't meth addicts. They aren't waste-oids. And they certainly aren't timid or lacking in education to leave. They are hard-working, dedicated US Citizens. They care about politics and see the Iowa Caucus to be both a responsibility and an honor. And my grandfather, a World War II veteran who is over 85 years old, is not waiting to die. He is still farming near [REDACTED], his arthritic hands evidence of the great commitment he has to the land, the state, and the country. My aunt farms along with him, also choosing a commitment to Iowa's farm culture and history over what you might call a more "cultured" life elsewhere in the US.

Recently I've had the opportunity to interview for a residency position in [REDACTED] at universities across the country. Along the way, I've met several individuals who have no idea what or where Iowa is. A department chair claimed, "Iowa has two large medical centers, and that's about it." A physician in [REDACTED] claimed that she "Doesn't know much past Delaware, and farther than Virginia is practically no-man's land." I chose not to enlighten her that both of those states were primarily south, rather than west, of [REDACTED]. And you call Iowans culturally-challenged.

Another individual asserted that "someone who grows up and never leaves [REDACTED] is ultimately more cultured than someone who never leaves Iowa." I believe that it is what you make of the cultural opportunities available to you and not the sheer volume that exists within your city. And I certainly didn't see Emerson or Jane Smiley carved into the sidewalks of any of the cities in which I interviewed.

Unfortunately, rather than enlightening these individuals or giving them a true sense of who Iowa's people are, not just the waste-oids, and meth addicts (who I recognize, do exist in our state as they do in other parts of the country), but those hard-working and dedicated individuals who also contribute to Iowa's political debate. Instead, you've reinforced their stereotypes. You've made it so I will continue to encounter people who are ignorant of (with all of its problems) one of our nation's great states. And so I will continue to have to defend myself on all of these points. I'll continue to have to scrape my soul to describe every last reason why Iowa is a worth-while place. It's not that I don't

have a sense of balance, or a sense of humor. I'm not provincial. It's not that I'm not accustomed to reading articles in The Atlantic. It's merely that I'm sick and tired of trying to explain to those who have no idea about the beauty that resides within Iowa's rolling hills, why it is a meaningful place.

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

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--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>,
"sgbloom@iowa.uiowa.edu" <sgbloom@iowa.uiowa.edu>
Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 09:15:40 -0600
Subject: My Observations
Thread-Topic: My Observations
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
Accept-Language: en-US
acceptlanguage: en-US

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/>

Dear Mr. Bloom,

I have had the unfortunate opportunity to read your article that was published December 9, 2011 at www.theatlantic.com.

I have strong feelings about and have a great love for my home state of Iowa and further take serious offense to your broad generalizations about the Hawkeye State and its residents.

I was raised on a farm ten (10) miles north of [REDACTED] It is a modest community in south central Iowa, located in [REDACTED] County. As a young Iowan, I learned the values of hard work, respect, integrity and appreciation.

I was fortunate enough to then attend Drake University for my undergraduate studies as well as attended Drake University Law School. Currently I reside in a western suburb of Des Moines with my wife, who was raised in [REDACTED], who attended the University of Iowa.

I have traveled the great state of Iowa on numerous occasions, and the observations I have made are not one and the same observations that you describe in your article. I am not sure of your motive for writing that article but it sickens me to read your thoughts and feelings about Iowa and its inhabitants. Quite frankly your writing is offensive and disrespectful. It is disrespectful to all of the citizens of the state of Iowa, for correct me if I am wrong, but your salary as a University of Iowa professor is paid for from same taxpayers you belittle and call names. Where is your respect? Do you not respect the state that gives you employment and provides income for you and your family?

I could honestly go through your article and refute each and every allegation you make but honestly I do not believe it would do a bit of good. What I do believe would do you some good, would be to travel around the state of Iowa, stop in to these small towns and meet the people. Stop in to the local cafés or coffee shops, or grain elevator and meet the people that work hard every day and are thankful for what they have. With an open mind, you too may have a new found appreciation for the people that have paid your salary for the past twenty (20) years and maybe too some of your stereotypes will be alleviated.

As I close this email to you, I thought I would borrow the words of a former University of Iowa student and quarterback Ricky Stanzi, "Iowa - Love it or Leave it."

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

P.S. - in regards to your Labrador retriever Hannah, did you ever have the opportunity to take her hunting? I didn't think so. By you not ever take her hunting you deprived her of what she was bred and born to do.

You have sheltered that dog and made her narrow minded. You have deprived of something she would truly have enjoyed and have refused to allow her to broaden her world. Hopefully you have not deprived the U of I students, as you have your dog, and have taught them to be as closed minded as yourself.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Disclaimer - This email and any files transmitted with it are confidential and may contain information protected by the attorney-client privilege. This email is intended solely for the use of the individual(s) and/or entity(s) to whom it is addressed.

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 13:57:50 -0500
Subject: Fwd: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]
x-aol-global-disposition: G
DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

X-AOL-SCOLL-SCORE: [REDACTED]
X-AOL-SCOLL-URL_COUNT: 0
x-aol-sid: [REDACTED]

Hi Steve,

Just my two cents: I enjoyed yours!!

Happy Holidays,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: [REDACTED]
Sent: 12/9/2011 9:39:23 P.M. Central Standard Time
Subj: Fwd: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

>Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 20:12:27 -0500

>To:

>From: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>Subject: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

>Cc:

>Bcc: tomgoldstein@berkeley.edu, [REDACTED]

>[REDACTED], RJFoley@ap.org, BWundram@qctimes.com,

>[REDACTED], RogalOwenS@sau.edu, lena@welcomebooks.com,

>HilaryA@inaword.org, [REDACTED], [REDACTED]

>contact@raygunsite.com, [REDACTED]

>[REDACTED], [REDACTED],

>[REDACTED]

>grigsbym@missouri.edu, [REDACTED]

>[REDACTED]

>WeinbergS@missouri.edu, [REDACTED], ASilverman@npr.org

>

>Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't

>arrived yet; I may need some.

>

>[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-an](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/)

>d-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/

>

>steve

>--

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 20:16:26 -0500

>To: [REDACTED]

>From: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>Subject: my take on Iowa and the Caucuses

>Cc:

>Bcc:

>

>[REDACTED],

>Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't
>arrived yet; I may need some.

>

>[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-an](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/)

>d-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/

>

>steve

>

>p.s. let me know how you, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] are doing....

>

>--

>Stephen G. Bloom

>

>Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of

>Communication Studies University of Michigan

>

>Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of

>Journalism The University of Iowa

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 20:35:21 -0500

To:

From: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: My take on Iowa and the Caucuses

Cc:

Bcc: [REDACTED] bsussman@niemanwatchdog.org, lsirulnick@optonline.net,
[REDACTED], katrina@welcomebooks.com, Michael.Judge@wsj.com, benb@artworksmagazine.com,
acros3@email.uky.edu, awilson1@herald-leader.com

X-Attachments:

Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't arrived yet; I may need some.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/>

steve

--

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

>Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 17:59:45 -0500

>To:

>From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>Subject: My take on Iowa

>Cc:

>Bcc: [REDACTED]

>

>wayne.svoboda@journalism.cuny.edu, wbc7@columbia.edu,

>jeffrey-denburg@uiowa.edu, [REDACTED]

>[REDACTED] krohder@jjc.edu, erica-blair@uiowa.edu,

>a [REDACTED], natalia-mielczarek@uiowa.edu,

>[REDACTED] dm2021@columbia.edu,

[REDACTED] mark-blumberg@uiowa.edu, [REDACTED]

>wlerude@unr.edu, le-young@uiowa.edu, [REDACTED]

>crowley@unr.edu

>X-Attachments:

>

>Thought you'd enjoy....

>My order of Kevlar clothing hasn't arrived yet....but I think I might need it.

>steve

>

><http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-an>

>d-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 22:15:41 -0500

Subject: Nice article in The Atlantic!

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Hi Mr. Bloom,

How are you?? I'm doing well here in NYC. I read your article in The Atlantic and I want you to know that I really enjoyed it. It was so well-written and definitely captivated the essence of rural Iowa. I've seen on Facebook a lot of students aren't too fond of it (haters) but I want you to know that I really enjoyed it. Let me know if you're ever in town (I assume you'll be doing a lot of TV appearances after this one? jk) But seriously I would love to grab lunch!

All the best,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:22:00 -0500
>To: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>
>From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Fwd: "Obersvations of 20 years of Iowa Life"
>Cc:
>Bcc:
>X-Attachments:
>

>>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 13:02:43 -0600
>>Subject: "Obersvations of 20 years of Iowa Life"
>>From: [REDACTED]
>>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>>
>>Professor Bloom,
>>
>>Your stereotypical commentary on "Iowa life" is entirely ridiculous
>>and only serves as an example of your own ignorance/arrogance.
>>Every author is entitled to their own opinion, however your portrayal
>>of Iowans and Iowa life is written as though it's fact.
>>Waiving your visits to all 99 counties and your ownership of a dog
>>further exemplifies your ignorance. You're a disgrace to the
>>university you teach at.
>>
>>[REDACTED]
>>- an Iowan that's spent 21 years of life in Iowa, owns a dog, and has
>>failed to record the number of Iowa counties visited.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 16:47:03 -0800

>Subject: Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life article

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Dr. Bloom:

>

>I just read your Atlantic article. I found it almost unbelievably
>condescending and offensive not only to the state of Iowa, but to
>former Iowans and graduates of the University of Iowa.

>

>Although some of your observations in your article were somewhat
>accurate, this is one of the worst articles - as a native Iowan,
>graduate of the University of Iowa, and who now lives in California and
>has has perspectives from living on both coasts - on Iowa that I've
>ever read.

>

>The caucus process - which I guess is what you were writing about, but
>instead the article seems more intent on finding as many negative
>things as you can say about Iowa than focusing on the positives - has
>*always* attracted screwballs. That's the nature of the caucus process,
>it empowers the salivating party activists. Its an inherently
>undemocratic way of picking a Presidential candidate because it panders
>to fanaticism, and with the polarization that's taking place nationally
>it is more magnified in a small place like Iowa.

>

>If you are so unhappy being a professor at Iowa - as it is obvious from
>the tone of your article that you've felt deep down, for years, that
>you should be teaching somewhere else more "upper tier" (like, say, the
>University of Michigan), then why bother coming back when your current
>visiting professorship is done?

>

>I'm sure there are lots of people that will gladly help you pack...
>was the only way you could get published was to write a negative
>article for the Atlantic, which is a typical coastal publication that's
>not about to publish anything positive about flyover country?
>The Atlantic thinks nothing exists outside of NYC, which is one reason
>I never bother to read it, and a whole host of other publications that
>are clustered on thinking the only culture in this country is in NYC or
>LA.

>

>All the article does is reinforce existing perceptions of flyover
>country. Iowa's rural areas are *no* different than rural areas in
>other parts of the country, including California. The same things are
>happening in rural California, in rural North Carolina, in rural
>Montana, in rural New York, in rural (PUT IN NAME HERE) that are
>happening in Iowa... the elderly and poorly educated are being left
>behind. So Iowa is by no means unique in this regard. Why not write
>about that instead of bashing the state that's put money in the bank -
>for you - and food in your belly - while demanding nothing more than

>teaching a couple of classes a semester and generous paid time off
>every few years to navel gaze on sabbatical?
>
>If this article is an example of what's considered "good journalism
>writing" these days, I know that I'm certainly not going to encourage
>either of my children from studying journalism, and, in fact, its
>probably a department that needs to be eliminated in favor of increased
>funding for science, math and engineering professors. We need students
>trained in these disciplines, not in writing propaganda.
>
>Please stay at Michigan; you can keep Coleman company with coffee
>klatsch stories from your days at Iowa when you both underpaid and
>underappreciated. I'll make sure to target any further donations I make
>to the University to departments that actually contribute something
>useful to society rather than journalists, who no longer report but are
>all left (or right) wing op-ed writers under the guise of "news".
>



--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 22:19:29 -0600

Subject: Observations from 20 years of Iowa life?

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Dear Mr. Bloom,

I recently read your article *Observations from 20 years of Iowa Life*, and I am ashamed that a man who has lived in this great state for that long can so ignorantly bash it. I am a sophomore at Iowa State University, and an Iowa native. I grew up not far from the Mississippi River, and your remark that river towns are some of the "scuzziest" you have been through, is a giant slap to the face of hundreds of men and women who work to maintain the beauty of these towns and cities today. They may not be as "perfect" as San Fransisco, but they are just fine everyone else. I also have been wondering to myself if you have ever been on a boat on the Mississippi: I go out on her almost weekly in the summer to fish and swim, and I haven't seen more than a handful of beer cans floating on by. We also aren't gun toting meth and booze fueled rednecks who go out shooting anything we see. It is statistically more dangerous to play high school football that to go hunting (and we hunt deer and turkey with shotguns, not rifles, except for an antler less deer season in southern Iowa). We say Merry CHRISTmas, and Happy Easter, because we were raised that way, and almost everyone we see out and about is celebrating these holidays. You make it seem like we are bad people for trying to be friendly. These are just the most prominent issues I felt, you missed the ball on entirely. While I respect everyone's right to free speech and realize you may say anything you want, I would encourage you to think about what you are putting on to paper. We Iowans are not all under-educated illiterates, and I am sure I am not the only person who is upset at your blatant stereotypical over-generalizations of our fine state. I hope that, with time, your complete and utter ignorance of the Iowans and out lifestyles, will cease to exist before you give the nation more bigoted "observations" of Iowa.

Thank you for your time,

[REDACTED]

--

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:11:20 -0600

Subject: Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Professor Bloom,

My name is [REDACTED] and I am a recent graduate of the University of Iowa via the College of Engineering and a proud native Iowan. I have lived within the state lines all 24+ years of my life and am not ashamed to say so. That being said, I have been to many places around this country and after visiting those places, there is no other place that I would like to call home than this state.

I recently read your article *Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life*, and am taken aback by all of the generalities and back-handed comments that you made towards this state. I have been here long enough to know that this state has it's shortcomings (lack of diversity, methanfedamines, etc.) but, in my opinion, the state's positive characteristics significantly outweigh the negatives. Anyone can look at a state and say, "Well, here is what this state sucks at:", and quite frankly, it is the easy way out.

Now, I am certainly not, as you so eloquently described, a typical "rural" Iowan. I grew up and currently reside in Mason City, a town close to the Minnesota border and inhabiting around 29,000 people. I do not own a gun of any kind, am more or less politically apethetic, and go to church when I can. It absolutely sickens me that journalists such as yourself paint this terribly prejudiced and generalized view of Iowa, saying that we lack education, wield guns recklessly, and fall back on religion like an old habit. At my place of work, I interact with plenty of people you would consider a part of "Rural America" and in my personal opinion, I hold them in very high regard. They are some of the most honest, down to earth people you will ever meet. This is also coming from someone who is anything but "Rural America."

Your education claim simply lacks merrit and is lacking evidence. Iowa is known for (along with fellow Midwestern states such as Minnesota and Wisconsin) setting the bar academically with regards to nationwide standardized testing at the grade school level. They don't call it the Iowa Test of Basic Skills for nothing. The University of which you teach at is also home to a top tier med school, a top 30 law school, and a top 10 accounting division of the business school. There is also a common saying in Iowa that says if you were to give the bottom row of counties in Iowa to Missouri, both states would be considered smarter. But I digress...

You also mention that Iowans tend not to parade around and show off the wealth that they possess. How on Earth is that a way to belittle a state? I am sorry that people here keep to themselves about their personal assets and don't go driving around in Bently's or Hummer H3's out of respect to their fellow man. But if you insist, that is a problem we will gladly accept. I am also sorry that people here do not discount a person because they manage a department store or hold another middle class position, but instead judge a person on the way they conduct him or herself.

I will recognize that in saying that it is somewhat interesting that a state like Iowa would lead off the country's political

race. However, is this not more a faulty product of our political system? Iowa gets the attention it receives because it matters. If what you say is true, in that 50% of those that win the Iowa caucus win the nomination, then why wouldn't you spend an inordinate amount of time here? Just an observation I am making.

The education that I possess from grade school up to my Bachelor's Degree from the University of Iowa is something that I consider one of the greatest accomplishments of my life. To think that it would be discredited because of some outside source saying that it doesn't stack up to others is extremely infuriating to me. I understand that you may not have meant it personally, but the fact of the matter is perception is often times reality, and my perception of this article is a very subjective and generalized view of a large number of proud Americans. I am not meaning this to be a personal attack on you either. I am simply wanting to point out that while all states have their shortcomings, their positive qualities should be recognized as well. I hope you consider this in your future pieces on this state, or any state for that matter.

--

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 15:44:19 -0800

>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Let's hope that the students in your journalism classes rely on facts

>in their own writing careers. You've obviously based this article on

>your own arrogant notions about what it means to be lowan. You have

>missed your mark, sir. If you truly feel that you have put together an

>accurate portrayal of lowan life, then maybe it's time for you to move

>on. We will help you pack.

>

✓ [REDACTED]

>

>This email was written based on observations from 27 years of Iowa Life

— —

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]
From: [REDACTED]
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: observations from 20 years of Iowa Life
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 21:17:49 -0600

You should be ashamed of yourself..writing such a disgusting article. If Iowa is so bad..move away from Iowa.

You don't mind your large salary from Iowa....you are not an Iowan and never will be with that attitude

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

X-Yahoo-Newman-Property: ymail-3

X-Yahoo-Newman-Id: [REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature [REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 09:05:38 -0800

From: [REDACTED]

Reply-To: [REDACTED]

Subject: "Observations From 20 Years of Iowa Life"

To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

This email is in response to your article, "Observations From 20 Years of Iowa Life" that appeared in *The Atlantic* on December 9, 2011. The comments you made about Keokuk, IA were contentious, erroneous, and ignorant. I expect better from a professor and a "journalist".

Let me educate you. Keokuk is a far cry from being a "depressed, crime-infested slum town". We have beautiful homes, a fantastic riverfront, and wonderful parks. We have the Grand Theatre (formerly the Keokuk Opera House) built in the 1800s; the Miller House Museum, home of Samuel Freeman Miller who was appointed to the US Supreme Court by President Lincoln; and several other historically maintained buildings. Our town boasts a concert association that has been in existence for more than 80 years and has held a nationally recognized blues festival for more than 20 years.

In addition, we received (and still hold) the designation of a Cultural and Entertainment District in 2005 by the State Historical Society of Iowa and won the Great American Main Street Award in 2000.

I could go on and on, but I suspect that my time would be wasted on someone who refuses to do their homework before using a broad brush to form an uninformed opinion. I hope you expect more from your students.

[REDACTED]
Keokuk Iowa resident (by cho ce)

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 14:19:45 -0500

>Subject: Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Mr. Bloom,

>I am a graduate of the University of Iowa, I grew up in Iowa, and I
>cannot believe how your article "Observations from 20 Years of Iowa
>Life" was able to get so many things right about life in Iowa while
>getting so many things entirely wrong about Iowa. Your attempt to
>summarize your observations is misguided and inaccurate. Where are you
>walking your dog in Iowa City where people ask you "Where do you hunt
>the bitch?" I lived in Iowa City for eight years with a black Labrador
>and I never answered any questions about hunting. I would have to tell
>friendly Iowans who do like to take up conversation with strangers
>(I've observed this in San Francisco but not as
>frequently) about how old she is and what tricks she could perform but
>NEVER any questions about hunting. I find this hard to believe.
>Maybe in Solon, Kalona, or other rural areas. Also, your comment about
>the Iowa "accent" is true. Iowans tend to speak in a different
>dialect, but how is this different from any other part of the country.
>If you lived in Memphis or Boston, would you point out these speech
>differences? Also, do you read anything related to Iowa's farm
>economy? If you had read anything related to Iowa's farm economy you
>would realize your commentary on the lingering effects of the Farm
>Crises are only half true. Also, not everyone shops for clothes at
>Wal-Mart. Are you married? Does your wife ever shop for clothes in
>downtown Iowa City? Have you seen what your students wear to class?
>Can you buy Northface, Prada bags, designer jeans and shoes at
>Wal-Mart?

>

>What I have pointed out are just a few very minor details of your
>article that represent what your article truly is: an inaccurate
>descriptive narrative that uses tired stereotypes in order to tell a
>story that Iowans are not representative of the rest of the country and
>Iowa should not have the political impact that it has with the
>presidential election. I could dispute many other points you make but
>I don't have the time to write them and you do not have the time to
>read them. You are correct, life in Iowa isn't representative of life
>in California, New York, Massachusetts or New Jersey. Life in those
>states isn't representative of life in Iowa and that should suit any
>citizen of these states mentioned just fine.

>

>Also, people say "Merry Christmas" to one another all over the country.
>Yes, it is a Christian holiday but my Jewish and Muslim friends aren't
>offended when someone says "Merry Christmas" to them because they are
>thick skinned and understand that the gesture isn't meant to be
>insulting, or politically incorrect, rather just a simple, polite
>gesture.

>

>Also, I find it particularly sad that you have lived in Iowa for twenty
>years and still have not made any real connection to the ethos of the
>place. Is that a reflection of Iowans or on you? My father-in-law
>grew up in Manhattan has lived in Iowa for 30 years and he wouldn't
>call any place home but Iowa. If you are going to describe the same
>tired stereotypes, at least tell the other side of the story that is
>Iowa. I won't point out what this other side is but you don't have to
>look much further than the Iowa City area or even Des Moines for that
>manner. I appreciated your view point and opinion but I hope you're a
>better ambassador for the University of Iowa and the state than what
>your article leads readers to believe.

>

>Merry Christmas,

>



[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

>Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 13:53:56 -0600

>Subject: Observations from 20 years of Iowa Life

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Stephen,

>

>Do you think you would appreciate Iowa more if Agriculture in Iowa was

>no more advanced than at the time of the American Industrial Revolution

>in the nineteenth century?

>

>Our Iowa schools still resemble the schools of that time.

>

>Maybe it's the education system in Iowa that needs to change in order

>to bring prosperity back to Iowa!

>

>[REDACTED]

>

>--

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

X-IronPort-Anti-Spam-Filtered: true

X-IronPort-Anti-Spam-Result:

X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]

X-Previous-IP: [REDACTED]

From: "[REDACTED]"

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:50:57 -0600

Subject: Observations of Iowa

I just read your Observation from 20 years of Iowa life. Wow you are a piece of work. You write all this crap about what you don't like about Iowa yet you let all us back home country hunting fishing beer drinking hicks pay your salary by sending our children to U of I. Why stay here if you find some much wrong with this wonderful state? I wasn't born here, I didn't move here until I was 13, and I came from a huge town, I went from a graduating class of 600 to 42 and I have 2 kids that I wouldn't want to raise anywhere else. My advice is if you don't like it here then move we don't need people like your teaching our children and we don't need closed minded people like you here in our state. Same sex marriages really that is a issue for you? We have been at war for years, young men and women have died, we have people nation wide with out jobs, we are in a nation wide economic recession but 2 people same sex or not shouldn't marry and you call yourself educated....I call you a judgmental jerk who is clearly very uneducated in th was of the world. I would rather be small town, a christian, a good neighbor and everything else you have a problem with then be like you!

Connected by DROID on Verizon Wireless

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

>X-Yahoo-Newman-Property: ymail-3

>X-Yahoo-Newman-Id: [REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 15:56:32 -0800

>From: [REDACTED]

>Reply-To: [REDACTED]

>Subject: observations

>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>damn dude! YOU ARE SUCH A DOUCHE! just an fyi

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

From: Mark Blumberg <mark-blumberg@uiowa.edu>

Subject: oh my...

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:14:48 -0600

To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

X-Originating-IP: [128.255.62.21]

what have you wrought? My colleagues were talking about your article before a faculty meeting today. Apparently you've gone viral. Congratulations!

Did you accept Colbert?

M

Mark S. Blumberg, Ph.D.

F. Wendell Miller Professor

Editor-in-Chief, *Behavioral Neuroscience*

Member, *The Iowa Delta Center*

Departments of Psychology and Biology

E11 Seashore Hall

University of Iowa

Iowa City, Iowa 52242

Office: 319.335.2424

Lab: 319.335.3975

Fax: 319.335.0191

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 11:26:31 -0600

Subject: On corns and soybeans

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

"It's an agricultural (corns and soybeans), landlocked state." Are these the corns you were referring to?-

<http://www.mayoclinic.com/health/corns-and-calluses/DS00033>

It is better to remain silent and be thought a fool than to open one's mouth and remove all doubt.

[REDACTED]

>X-RC-FROM: [REDACTED]
>X-RC-RCPT: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Oops!
>From: [REDACTED]
>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 11:09:32 -0600
>To: Steve Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>
>S,
>Well, what's the second idea?
> [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: "Charis Carlson, Jeff" <jcharisc@iowacity.gannett.com>
>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>,
> "sgbloom@umich.edu" <sgbloom@umich.edu>
>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 13:28:47 -0700
>Subject: opinion responses to your Atlantic essay
>Thread-Topic: opinion responses to your Atlantic essay
>Thread-Index: Acy6nvvRveCwanP9RZWS+ilmiY3R9Q==
>Accept-Language: en-US
>acceptlanguage: en-US

>
>Stephen,
>
>Just a heads up that the Press-Citizen Editorial Board will be weighing
>in tomorrow on your Atlantic essay with what seems to be the general
>consensus opinion: Supporting many of your broader points but taking
>umbrage at your tone.
>
>I've read through your e-mail responses to the newspaper as well as
>your discussion with Kyle Munson with the Register. If you have a point
>to make about the essay - or the backlash - that you think has not yet
>been made, please feel free to give me a call.

>
>I'll be in and out of the office for the next few hours, but I'll be
>available by email.

>
>Thanks,
>Jeff

>
>Jeff Charis-Carlson
>Opinion page editor
>Iowa City Press-Citizen
>123 N. Linn St. Suite 2E
>Iowa City, IA 52245

>
>office: 319-887-5435
>cell: 319-330-3321

>
>www.press-citizen.com

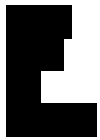
>

E

I've noted on Facebook that many Iowans are upset about your recent article published in the Atlantic. I'm decently positive you are receiving a lot of hate-mail right now, and this is why I wanted to take the time to say that I appreciated the article.

Iowa is a unique state and that's why I'll always love it. When my partner went home with me for the first time his first reaction was: "I can't believe *this* is where you are from." It looked like his head was going to explode out of sheer awe, he just couldn't get his head around how I was the product of this environment. I'm both the thesis and antithesis of Iowa, like many other products of IowaŠ and that's what makes the state so great!

Country	Percentage of U.S. born population aged 18 and over
Country 1	~95%
Country 2	~85%
Country 3	~75%
Country 4	~65%
Country 5	~55%
Country 6	~45%
Chicago, IL	~40%
Country 8	~35%
Country 9	~30%
Country 10	~25%
Country 11	~20%
Country 12	~15%
Country 13	~10%
Country 14	~5%
Country 15	~2%



Attachments:

Steve b&w.jpg; bloom foto1.jpg; Bloomphoto.jpg

>Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 14:32:24 -0500

>To: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>

>From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>Subject: photos

>Cc:

>Bcc:

>X-Attachments: :Macintosh HD:1933764:Steve b&w.jpg: :Macintosh

>HD:1933764:bloom foto1.jpg: :Macintosh HD:1933764:Bloomphoto.jpg:

>

>g,

>you have a choice.....s

[REDACTED]

From: <James.Kelleher@thomsonreuters.com>
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 19:06:30 +0000
Subject: Question from Reuters
Thread-Topic: Question from Reuters
Thread-Index: Acy6k30Nz6cUEgVWQ82pGddy+cLvXQ==
Accept-Language: en-US, en-GB
acceptlanguage: en-US, en-GB

Good afternoon, Professor Bloom. James Kelleher here in the Chicago bureau of Reuters news agency.

My editors have asked me to write a brief story about the kerfuffle over your piece about Iowa that appeared late last week on the website of The Atlantic magazine.

I've read the piece -- and will of course quote from it.

But I see from stories in the Des Moines Register et al that you have put out a statement reacting to some of your critics, some of whom I will be quoting.

Would you be so kind as to send me a copy of your statement?

Many thanks in advance.

JBK

.....
James B. Kelleher

National Correspondent, Reuters America Service

Thomson Reuters

312 408-8130 (o)

312 636-8835 (m)

E-mail: james.kelleher@reuters.com

Twitter: [windycityreuter](#)

Facebook: James Kelleher-Reuters

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d=patch.com; s=google;
h=mime-version:date:message-id:subject:from:to:content-type;
bh=oJ/F5VGBk03A/ogxQAjD2LkVWR2tWeEiUk91Tx79Kc=;
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DcRbKGNUFUQIMMgGfGrzrbPW6jUs9Avo919sQXT5SqCcuWxX50qu+0A1yehzfKWsnUf2
keV+XvGXUgbFzyncuy3+FP9lf3XX82yQZr54=

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 13:10:12 -0600

Subject: quick questions for article

From: Brian Morelli <brian.morelli@patch.com>

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>, <sgbloom@umich.edu>

Hi Prof. Bloom.

Kyle Munson of the Register describes in his words for the "first time in his career he was worried for his family's safety, was frightened by the "raging bonfire" of dissent."

My question: are you receiving threats and if so what are they and how are you getting them?

--

Brian Morelli

Associate Regional Editor, Iowa

Patch.com

(319) 594-2435

brian.morelli@patch.com

To advertise with Patch, contact:

John Hoeft

612-384-2396

john.hoeft@patch.com

Patch 

[REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

From: [REDACTED]

Subject: RE: 20 years in Iowa

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 19:14:27 -0600

December 14, 2011

[REDACTED]

Re: 20 years in Iowa

Dear Prof. Bloom:

I haven't read your article yet, but from what is quoted by you, I would have to agree with you.

I grew up in Iowa and eventually returned 25 years later (with some sojourns in Iowa City in my twenties and early 30's--**which does not count as living in Iowa**). I can attest to the statement that Iowa is "*. . . political schizophrenic, economically depressed, and culturally challenged*". Every year, my wife and I (she is [REDACTED] native) have to bug out for [REDACTED] for two months in order to regain our sanity. Of interest, is the fact that we sit on a [REDACTED], 25 miles from [REDACTED] one mile from a meth infested former glory town of [REDACTED] (logging & salmon fishing). However, even the druggies are engaged and aware of the world around them for at least a 400 miles radius. In rural Iowa, that awareness generally extends to a five mile radius.

Most of the comments that I have read highlight Iowa citizen's lack of self regard and self esteem. It extends from rural Iowa to the cities.

Most of the comments highlight the lack of true travel to other geographic areas or cultures. You cannot expand if you travel in a herd of like minded people.

Most of the comments from former Iowans fail to mention that few will return to their hometowns to settle. Most of these people visit for a week a year. The locals are always careful to be open and welcoming for a few days. However, if that same former Iowan returned to live, life would be very difficult: even in their home town (I was once accused of wearing the wrong farmer hat and "*going the wrong way in a Fareway grocery store*").

I can go on and on. However, I do know that my wife and I moved back to the community that has been home to our family for 155 years and when I didn't do things the "*Iowa Way*", a large cross section of the welcoming community attempted to run us out of town---via threats, ostracism, dirty tricks, and attempted violence. We are still here because the locals were nothing more than stupid bullies with no backbone even when they outnumbered us 5 to 1.

Keep up the good work!



--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 21:06:51 -0500

To: [REDACTED]

From: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: RE: Sullivan: Real observations from 20 years of Iowa life

Cc:

Bcc:

X-Attachments:

[REDACTED],

Thank you! I am appalled by the reaction my article has generated. I have received hateful emails and telephone calls. Some people have gone as far as threatening me AND MY FAMILY. I guess that's the part of Iowa I was writing about in the piece. I deeply appreciate your words of encouragement and support at this time....

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

December 14, 2011

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

RE: Sullivan: Real observations from 20 years of Iowa life

Dear Mr. Sullivan:

The idea that you think visiting the family farm is being in touch with "*. . . rural Iowans*" is laughable, but more importantly destructive to Professor Bloom. You spout half baked ideas of an indulgent twenty year old. Contrary to your assertion, Iowa City is not Iowa and an occasional visit to Preston is not understanding Iowa.

I would note that most males in rural United States (much less Iowa) don't trust a man without a penknife.

I'd suggest you visit a high school graduation party--they are easy to find---just look for the pickups, the open garage doors, and the smell of Cheesy Potatoes if you think rural cuisine is edible.

And if you think guns and religion aren't just about number 1 in the "*Country*" (yes that is Country with a capital C,

and yes you want to draw out the "oooounn"), just stop by Preston during deer shotgun season #1 or #2. Remember to wear your orange vest and Elmer Fudd hat.

I'd give you about six weeks in rural Iowa before you were either asked to leave or you fled.

[REDACTED]

--

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

To: <adam-sullivan@uiowa.edu>

Subject: RE: Sullivan: Real observations from 20 years of Iowa life

From: [REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 19:45:48 -0600

December 14, 2011

[REDACTED]

RE: Sullivan: Real observations from 20 years of Iowa life

Dear Mr. Sullivan:

The idea that you think visiting the family farm is being in touch with ". . . *rural Iowans*" is laughable, but more importantly destructive to Professor Bloom. You spout half baked ideas of an indulgent twenty year old. Contrary to your assertion, Iowa City is not Iowa and an occasional visit to Preston is not understanding Iowa.

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I'd give you about six weeks in rural Iowa before you were either asked to leave or you fled.

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar



>Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 14:36:18 -0500

>To: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>

>From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>Subject: Re: alternate address

>Cc:

>Bcc:

>X-Attachments:

>

>garance,

>Second sentence of the sixth paragraph should start, "Northeast of

>Cedar Rapids..." deleting THE.

>o.k.? thx! s

[REDACTED]

From: Jonathan Ahl <jahl@iowapublicradio.org>
To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
CC: Katherine Perkins <kperkins@iowapublicradio.org>, Jeff Schmidt
<jschmidt@iowapublicradio.org>
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 13:39:49 -0500
Subject: RE: Another idea for interview with IPR
Thread-Topic: Another idea for interview with IPR
Thread-Index: Acy5vBk4HwkXhjHKQx6UJVfPLGIWqwAAB28QAAHW/rA=
Accept-Language: en-US
acceptlanguage: en-US

Mr. Bloom:

Our producer, Katherine Perkins passed along your note to me, and I felt somewhat compelled to respond.

You close by saying the you hope we understand your decision. We do. No one enjoys what can be the hate-filled diatribes that come from people (often anonymous) that are an unfortunate byproduct of journalism, analysis, well-informed opinion and speaking the truth that is inherent in what we do. I received a few of those calls in the past 20 minutes. There will be more. It's part of what we do, and quite frankly, it sucks. It's unfair. It's not right.

So yes, we understand. However that understanding does not mitigate our disappointment in our decision. We are disappointed because we are not those people casting hate-filled diatribes at you. We are not the ones who are threatening you. We are not the people causing you damage. Furthermore, we have offered a level of protection and consideration that goes above and beyond because we understand your situation. We seek a higher level of discourse that gets to the real issues of which you write, without spewing venom. Yet you will still not speak to us about your work. In short, you have convicted us for the sins of others. And for someone who has built his career and life's passion to speaking truth, you of all people should be aware how patently unfair that is. It's unfair to us, and it's unfair to the listeners of Iowa Public Radio.

I understand your points and respect your decision. But I don't like it. I hope you understand my point.

Sincerely,

Jonathan

Jonathan Ahl | News Director | Iowa Public Radio
2111 Grand Avenue, Suite 100 | Des Moines, IA 50312
T 515.725.1702 | F 515.725.1714 | iowapublicradio.org

From: stephen bloom [<mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>]
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2011 11:25 AM
To: Katherine Perkins
Subject: Re: Another idea for interview with IPR

Katherine,

The tenor of the responses I have received in response to the article have sunk so low that I simply can't go on the show. I've been called all sorts of hateful things. And they're not just directed at me, but my family.

So, this is what I suggest. Below is a response I'd like to be read on air. I'd ask that this be read in its entirety.

It's a shame that I have to do this. It's not how I have ever responded to a request for a free and open discussion. But I fear now is not the time for such a healthy exchange of ideas.

I hope you understand. I am sorry.

stephen

"For 40 years as a journalist, I've tried to shine a light into dark corners. That's what good journalists do. They don't accept what politicians, government bureaucrats, corporate spokespeople say is the truth. Good journalism isn't just reporting. It's making observations, trying to make sense out of the world and its shadows- even if readers don't agree with those observations.

"This lengthy story asks readers to think about the long-term future of Iowa. It raises uncomfortable truths rarely discussed - but truths that absolutely need to be discussed no matter how difficult it may be to do so.

"When my book *Postville* came out in 2000, I was called some of the most hateful names imaginable. Many of my fellow Iowans took issue with me and what I reported. Eleven years later, the issues I raised in that book- about undocumented workers, pollution, unsafe working conditions, sexual abuse, financial irregularities - all have proven true.

"As happened with *Postville*, over the last several days, I've received scores of emails and phone calls, calling me all sorts of hateful things. Some of the responses, frankly, are frightening.

"Diversity of opinion is a cornerstone of democratic thought and principle. It's what we hold above almost everything else.

"The easiest response to my article is to condemn me and the issues I raise. That's a tried-and-true tactic. Kill the messenger, ignore the message. That's safe and convenient. But it doesn't get at some of the raw, undeniable questions this story poses."

Stephen -

Would you be willing to do the interview if all listener feedback came from social media? Facebook, Twitter and email. Then we would have the chance to see the comments and forward on the valid, rational arguments without all the emotion?

Katherine Perkins | Producer | Iowa Public Radio

710 S. Clinton St. | Iowa City, IA 52242

T 319.384.0908 | M 515.291.1763 | kperkins@iowapublicradio.org

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 15:12:19 -0500
>From: David Scanlon <dscanlon@sbgnet.com>
>To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Re: CBS 2 KGAN Story
>X-Originating-IP: [10.100.215.146]

>
>Stephen,
>
>Thanks for getting back to me. It's truly unfortunate that responses
>have turned ugly. I understand your reluctance to an interview.
>Thank you for your response. I've been assigned a different story for
>today, but will pass the message along to other reporters here.
>I'm not sure they'll do a story or not, but I'll make sure they
>understand your response and the context.

>
>Please let me know if you have any questions

>
>Best Regards,

>
>David

>
>
>
>
>
>----- Original Message -----

>From: "stephen bloom" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>To: "David Scanlon" <dscanlon@sbgnet.com>
>Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2011 11:28:25 AM
>Subject: Re: CBS 2 KGAN Story

>
>
>David,
>Thanks for your message.
>The tenor of the responses I have received in response to the article
>have sunk so low that I simply can't be interviewed for the show. I've
>been called all sorts of hateful things. And they're not just directed
>at me, but my family.
>So, this is what I suggest. Below is a response I'd like to be read on air.
>It's a shame that I have to do this. It's not how I have ever responded
>to a request for a media interview.
>I hope you understand. I am sorry.
>stephen

>
>
>"For 40 years as a journalist, I've tried to shine a light into dark
>corners. That's what good journalists do. They don't accept what
>politicians, government bureaucrats, corporate spokespeople say is the
>truth. Good journalism isn't just reporting. It's making observations,
>trying to make sense out of the world and its shadows- even if readers
>don't agree with those observations.

>
>
>"This lengthy story asks readers to think about the long-term future of
>Iowa. It raises uncomfortable truths rarely discussed - but truths that
>absolutely need to be discussed no matter how difficult it may be to do
>so.

>

>
>"When my book Postville came out in 2000, I was called some of the most
>hateful names imaginable. Many of my fellow Iowans took issue with me
>and what I reported. Eleven years later, the issues I raised in that
>book- about undocumented workers, pollution, unsafe working conditions,
>sexual abuse, financial irregularities - all have proven true.

>
>"As happened with Postville , over the last several days, I've received
>scores of emails and phone calls, calling me all sorts of hateful
>things. Some of the responses, frankly, are frightening.

>
>
>"Diversity of opinion is a cornerstone of democratic thought and
>principle. It's what we hold above almost everything else.

>
>
>"The easiest response to my article is to condemn me and the issues I
>raise. That's a tried-and-true tactic. Kill the messenger, ignore the
>message. That's safe and convenient. But it doesn't get at some of the
>raw, undeniable questions this story poses."

>
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>
>
>Hello,

>
>
>
>I'm working on a story about your recent column in the Atlantic. As I'm
>sure you know, there's been some reaction to the questions you raise
>and your observations. Was the timing of the article at significant?
>How do you feel about the response?

>
>
>If your available I'd like to meet to ask a few questions.

>
>
>
>Please let me know if you can help me with this.

>
>
>
>Thanks,

>
>
>
>David Scanlon
>Reporter/Photojournalist
>KGAN CBS 2/KFXA Fox 28
>319-213-4721

>DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
> d=gmail.com; s=gamma;
> h=mime-version:in-reply-to:references:date:message-id:subject:from:to
> :content-type:content-transfer-encoding;
> bh=6BMtFM44IJ/Uky4gOITP78uAvBJAol68h9wuyOiM0JI=;
> b=bJfLrfrb4QUDFo8FFm8UrWkaRCNfjv0Ay9B7g60UirpIDtniz5jXIFedFPfrY5ZuE
> 7xJZqaR/XTgB9Z+UwPUfvpvJE4nn/4qU+GkAVzrWhMYWu/HyWmgI+E0HwAzlhWeziXiAW
> laThM2eIJ9hZyBqDXt2jI25nscG1GximDVWzA=
>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 17:33:02 -0500
>Subject: Re: checking in
>From: Laura Klairmont <laura.klairmont@gmail.com>
>To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>
>Hi Professor Bloom,
>
>I just returned back from project in LA and sat down to read your
>piece. Wow. I feel like everyone in "the business" has been waiting for
>a piece of this nature to come out and spark a discussion. You were
>not the first person to send this to me-a producer in CNN's political
>unit had sent it around before I received it from you. So people are
>talking!
>
>I'll send a pitch along to State of the Union's guest booker, but will
>also reach out to Howie Kurtz's guest booker for Reliable Sources,
>which I foresee being a good fit. Are you going to be in DC at all or
>would this be for a remote interview? Are you planning on writing
>anything else directly focused on the Iowa Caucuses? You are the king
>of pitches, so if there is anything you'd like for me to write or add
>before I send it out, just let me know! You are going to be awesome on
>Colbert. That is so fantastic that you'll be on his show, I can't wait
>to check it out.
>
>I'm currently working in a team based out of the NY bureau that does
>Anderson Cooper's long form pieces.
>
>I'm glad Michael is using WISH-it's a bit expensive but it's
>convenient, safe, and will set him up with a network of people. If he
>decides that he wants to stray away from the Cap Hill scene, please let
>me know because I know of a few group houses closer to Dupont and U
>Street that always have a changing flow of people. Also the
>International Student House in Dupont always intrigued me.
>
>Okay, so I will wait to send out the pitches until I hear back with any
>feedback from you.
>
>Talk soon and congrats on your ongoing and diverse contributions in the
>sphere of journalism! I am so lucky to have had someone like you play
>such a pivotal role in my own journalistic endeavors.
>
>
>On Sun, Dec 11, 2011 at 9:44 PM, Stephen Bloom
><stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:
>> Laura,
>> Great to get your email! See that you've moved to NYC for CNN. What
>> are you doing? Would love to hear from you.....
>> If you have any connections any longer with Candy Crowley and the
>> State of the Union people in D.C., perhaps you could pass this story

>> onto them.....It's gone viral on the Internet, and I'm scheduled to
>> appear as a guest on the Colbert Report Jan. 3, the day of the Iowa Caucuses!
>> Here it is:
>>
>>[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/observations-from-
>>20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/)
>> Thanks also for the intern housing info for Michael.....He's used
>>the
>> service and is set up in a good place.
>>
>> steve
>> --
>> Stephen G. Bloom
>>
>> Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of
>> Communication Studies University of Michigan
>>
>> Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of
>> Journalism The University of Iowa
>>
>>

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
> d=gmail.com; s=gamma;
> h=mime-version:in-reply-to:references:date:message-id:subject:from:to
> :content-type:content-transfer-encoding;
> bh=scant8KgUWHFYdr6d+aYVmVKS/kFFBAb5LScdi7dG6s=;
> b=WdpEZOzAy7pdEOiQDKMHRbldTh0Zv1HL0RsFrhT6fZjvrI5/xrz0qcbgZWE4k1IIR
> 2N8AcBiYPwKaWrqAgvRa7tQ5mR9dXCYeV/Rc8CiYPafoIRJ+NYQOBMp2akwLEH2tZBg
> TAYdexRBWYTc97c2UMHepPSDD3PbIPUTCauYk=
>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:43:40 -0500
>Subject: Re: checking in
>From: Laura Klairmont <laura.klairmont@gmail.com>
>To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>

>I'm upset to hear that. What ever happened to free speech and people
>being appreciative of hearing a different opinion? I hope that things
>are settling down and that you and your family feel safe, less
>threatened. Anyone with any sense wouldn't react to any piece of
>journalism in such a vicious way.
>

>I'll let you know what they say at Reliable Sources. It looks like a
>lot of interviews have been pre-taped as Howie will be on vacation for
>the holidays.
>

>Talk soon!
>

>On Tue, Dec 13, 2011 at 5:56 PM, stephen bloom
><stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

>> Laura,
>> Great to get your email! Nice to read a happy email!
>> The amount of hatred that has been directed at me and my family
>> because of the piece is truly numbing. I can't tell you how ugly it has become.
>> Welcome to the side of Iowa I wrote about.
>> The Colbert people pulled out late last night for logistical
>> reasons....So, I'd welcome going on Howie's show to explain the piece to a wider audience.
>> Frankly, I'm freaked by the repugnant, small-minded reaction the
>> piece has generated in Iowa. In 40 years of doing journalism, I've
>> never gotten threats like these. This is the real thing and it's scary.
>> Pitch away to Reliable Sources.
>> So glad you're doing well. I knew you'd be a star!
>>

>> steve
>>
>>
>> _____
>>
>> .

>> Right now I'd trying to

>> Hi Professor Bloom,
>>

>> I just returned back from project in LA and sat down to read your
>> piece. Wow. I feel like everyone in "the business" has been waiting
>> for a piece of this nature to come out and spark a discussion. You
>> were not the first person to send this to me-a producer in CNN's
>> political unit had sent it around before I received it from you. So
>> people are talking!
>>

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>> Anderson Cooper's long form pieces.
>>
>> I'm glad Michael is using WISH-it's a bit expensive but it's
>> convenient, safe, and will set him up with a network of people. If
>> he decides that he wants to stray away from the Cap Hill scene,
>> please let me know because I know of a few group houses closer to
>> Dupont and U Street that always have a changing flow of people.
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>>
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>>> the Union people in D.C., perhaps you could pass this story onto
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>>> appear as a guest on the Colbert Report Jan. 3, the day of the Iowa Caucuses!
>>> Here it is:
>>>
>>>
>>><http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/>
>>> Thanks also for the intern housing info for Michael.....He's used
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>>> service and is set up in a good place.
>>>
>>> steve
>>> --
>>> Stephen G. Bloom
>>>
>>> Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of
>>> Communication Studies University of Michigan
>>>
>>> Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of
>>> Journalism The University of Iowa
>>>
>>>
>>

--
Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

X-SpamScore: -1

X-BigFish: VPS-1(zz9371Ic85fhzz1202hzz8275bh8275dhz2fh2a8h668h839h)

X-Forefront-Antispam-Report:

CIP:65.55.171.153;KIP:(null);UIP:(null);IPV:NLI;H:VA3DIAHUB050.RED001.local;RD:smtp801.microsoftonline.com;EFVD:NLI

From: Jillian Petrus <Jillian.Petrus@kcrp.com>

To: 'stephen bloom' <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 19:06:44 -0800

Subject: RE: comments for your piece

Thread-Topic: comments for your piece

Thread-Index: Acy5IC9dUzELVZ7uT+iXvvR8aa+T/AAI+6mg

Accept-Language: en-US

acceptlanguage: en-US

Thank you! As I said, hope all is well. Will you be coming back to the UI or are you planning a more permanent stay in Michigan? - just curious!

From: stephen bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]

Sent: Monday, December 12, 2011 4:48 PM

To: Jillian Petrus

Subject: comments for your piece

Jillian,

Don't have time to talk, but here are some comments you may use for your piece. Good luck! stephen

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

734.615.4038

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

For 40 years as a journalist, I've tried to shine a light into dark corners. That's what good journalists ought to do. They don't accept what politicians, government bureaucrats, corporate spokespeople say is the truth. Good journalism isn't just reporting. It's making observations, making sense out of the world - even if readers might not agree with those observations.

This lengthy story asks readers to think about the long-term future of the state of Iowa. It raises uncomfortable truths that are rarely discussed - but truths that absolutely need to be discussed.

When my book *Postville* came out in 2000, I was called some of the most despicable names imaginable. Eleven years later, the issues I raised - about undocumented workers, pollution, unsafe working conditions, sexual abuse, financial irregularities - all have proven true. Similarly, I ask Iowans to read this article and think about the unsettling truths it contains.

Subject: RE: FW: Iowans respond to Bloom's article
Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 10:10:00 -0500
Thread-Topic: FW: Iowans respond to Bloom's article
Thread-Index: Acy7OT8Z0mshMNavReiBy2ZWl9nDeQAAXKdg
From: "Franke-Ruta, Garance" <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Thanks for the insights. I told him that while I appreciated his letter I was at a loss to respond to his allegations that the story was full of errors since he did not actually point to any specific instances other than to dispute the number of cows in the state, and that I thought on reflection it was clear from the context you were talking about the upper Midwest and not Iowa when you mentioned the Holsteins. It has been very frustrating to me to see people saying the whole story is made up and full of errors but also not to have them point to specific things we could then address. It's how politicians talk, in fact.

Thanks also for the red Waldorf link -- very helpful and I have added it to the story.

Also, Lynda Waddington, formerly of the Iowa Independent, has written a response we'd like to run.

Thanks,
Garance

-----Original Message-----

From: Stephen Bloom [<mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>]
Sent: Thu 12/15/2011 9:52 AM
To: Franke-Ruta, Garance
Subject: Re: FW: Iowans respond to Bloom's article

Garance,

This man is a contract employee in another department at the University of Iowa. I met him once and quite frankly believe him to be mentally unstable. Others share in this opinion.

But that is not the point of what's going on here.

I wrote a story that is personal opinion. It is based on my own observations based on almost two decades of living in Iowa. It has struck a chord with many Iowans, who quite frankly, aren't used to people expressing themselves in a way that is different from their own perspective of the state they love. The piece has touched a raw nerve, and since it has come out, there has been a campaign of hate directed at me. My wife and my son are not immune to the hateful invective. The governor of the state has even weighed in.

>From a larger perspective, this is amazing. One article in an arcane (to many Iowans, at least) Washington-based website has generated such an uproar. Why exactly?

That, in itself, is complex and fascinating. I suggest it has some basis in the ease of response the Internet affords, the current political climate, a sense of protectiveness, but most of all because it's just easier to negate my comments than to examine what they say. The story and its tone are unfamiliar territory to many insular Iowans. And now, there's a mob mentality of piling on, let's kick the elitist professor. I feel like a character from *The Lottery* by Shirley Jackson.

As I mentioned Monday evening, I trust that you and The Atlantic will continue to support my desire to tell an important story that many Iowans may be unaccustomed to reading.

stephen

Figured since this guy is your colleague you'd want to know about this one. On review I think from the context you were talking about the upper Midwest when you were talking about the cows, not Iowa. There are fewer than 200K milk cows in the state.

-----Original Message-----

From: William Jennings [<mailto:william-jennings@uiowa.edu> <<mailto:william-jennings@uiowa.edu>>]
Sent: Thu 12/15/2011 1:21 AM
To: Franke-Ruta, Garance
Subject: Iowans respond to Bloom's article

Dear Ms. Franke-Ruta,

Mr. Bloom's observations about the problems faced by the state where he has made his living for the last 20 years are not entirely off-base or lacking in merit.

That's not what bothers many of those who actually took time to read the article through more than once, and who are also well aware of and even intimately familiar with his other work that is place-based narrative (Postville, The Oxford Project).

As a graduate of the Nonfiction Writing Program (MFA 1997) at The University of Iowa, as someone who has travelled this state as a working musician for over twenty years, and as someone who has worked in the food industry (helping to start one of the nation's first and most successful cooperative natural foods wholesale distributors, talking with small town citizens and farmers, driving trucks to deliver food to homes, churches, legion halls, and tiny store fronts---most of this during the 1980's Reagan Farm Crisis), and as someone who now teaches writing, reading, and critical thinking to University of Iowa undergraduates, I'm beyond obvious bait laid out in Bloom's flat, cliché riddled prose. The problems addressed by Bloom are urgent and have significant scope. They are also problems facing nearly all of the states through the Rust Belt, New England, and other regions---many the direct result of the deregulation frenzy begun under Reagan-Bush and now being preached as high sermons by those contending for the GOP nomination.

One thousand acres of Iowa crop land soaks up oil by the barrel. The fertilizer its industry-driven monoculture requires consumes significant amounts of oil to manufacture. The petrochemicals sprayed on mono crop agriculture are more barrels of oil. The machines, the driers, the processing plants for high fructose corn syrup, cheap beef, cheap pork, and cheap chicken, all demand underpriced commodities for input---and those underpriced commodities include the people who work in those plants and on those farms, whose injury and suicide rates are higher than most if not nearly all occupations. Bloom wants to claim he is shining a light into the dark corners where scurrilous work is being conducted beyond the knowledge of "coastals" and the meth-addled, Wal-Mart pacified, hunting obsessed, Jell-o Mold cranking locals who may well be drowning in billions of gallons of milk gushing from the "millions of Holstein cows" in our state..if any of that crap were actually true (the current Iowa Dairy herd is roughly 200,000.)

The problem with Mr. Bloom is Mr. Bloom's ego-driven, lazy, and self-aggrandizing pose. His facts are often wrong and unnecessarily so. If he had serious things to say and The Atlantic wished to publish an article about the relevant implications for Iowa's relevance, or lack of same, in an election year, he could have used the opportunity afforded him by your magazine to do so. Instead, he submitted you a half-baked string of lazy caricature in some half-considered attempt at an essay of implication. Your editorial staff alone should take what appeared in print as direct evidence to their negligence and unwillingness to call out a writer for not bothering to produce work to the standards of your publication. I've met Mr. Bloom on many occasions and shared a stage with him on Public Radio for a program mixing music and commentary. He's not a stranger to me. And he's not my perpetrator or bully or, convenient target for ad hominem attack. He was someone I considered a colleague. I don't anymore, not because of his hackneyed commentary about Iowans. But because of his use of one of our country's few remaining platforms for nonfiction writers to speak from authority, and rather than argue how literacy implicates us in our increasingly urgent work of democracy from the bottom up, he pulls out all the cheesy stops to endear himself to those who are perhaps sick of hearing about Iowa and it's role in the national political chitter chatter. And he does so at the expense, the real expense of those on whose real suffering and chronic problems he can conveniently don as a cloak for the pub shot and then toss off for its coarse and unpleasantness.

This isn't about the lack of perspective or that he failed to note the Iowa Tourism Brochure talking points, or the equally offensive stereotypes of "Iowa Nice".

It is about false assertions entwined with surface observational commentary and inserting it into hyperbolic, inaccurate, cliché saturated and smug narrative while fluffing your resumé and triumphing your own lack of substance as supplant for actual "style". And that is the indelible stamp of a hack. Period.

Will Jennings
Rhetoric Department
Creative Campus Institute Fellow 2011-2012
152 EPB
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

william-jennings@uiowa.edu
319.335.2593 Office
319.321.2995 Mobile

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 19:03:40 -0500
>From: [REDACTED]
>To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Re: Fwd: The Colbert Report
>X-CubMail-Sender: [REDACTED]
>X-No-Spam-Score: Local
>
>Cool!
>
>Quoting Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>:

>>Check out the below...

>>

>>

>>Begin forwarded message:

>>

>>>From: Emily Lazar <emily.lazar@thecolbertreport.org>

>>>Date: December 11, 2011 6:34:17 PM EST

>>>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>>>Subject: The Colbert Report

>>>

>>

>>>Hi Professor Bloom-

>>>

>>>

>>>

>>>'I'm a producer working with Comedy Central's Stephen Colbert. I'm

>>>writing to see if I could discuss with you being a guest on The

>>>Colbert Report on Tuesday, January 3, the day of the Iowa Caucuses.

>>>

>>>

>>>

>>>This would be a 6 minute one on one conversation shot live to tape in

>>>front of an audience in New York City.

>>>

>>>

>>>

>>>We'd like you to talk with Stephen about Iowa and the character of

>>>the people who get to launch our electoral process. (We realize

>>>you're in Michigan this year.)

>>>

>>>

>>>

>>>We would obviously pay for your travel to New York City and for you

>>>hotel accommodations while you're here.

>>>

>>>

>>>

>>>Would this interest you? Can we discuss this further? I'm at

>>>212-649-6226 or email me the best way to get in contact with you by phone.

>>>

>>>

>>>

>>>I hope to hear from you.

>>>

>>>

>>>

>>>All the best,
>>>
>>>
>>>Emily J. Lazar
>>>
>>>Supervising Producer
>>>
>>>The Colbert Report
>>>
>>>212-649-6226
>>>
>>>
>>>
>

--
Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

Subject: Re: Fwd: The Colbert Report
Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 18:55:05 -0500
Thread-Topic: The Colbert Report

Thread-Index: [REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

X-Proofpoint-Virus-Version: vendor=fsecure engine=2.50.10432:5.5.7110,1.0.211,0.0.0000
definitions=2011-12-10_06:2011-12-09,2011-12-10,1970-01-01 signatures=0

Like duhhhh. Why are you even asking? Lol

... Of course, I'm advising after several sheets to the wind. I'll call tomorrow for our come to jesus comedy central chat!

Sent from my BlackBerry Wireless Handheld

From: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

To: [REDACTED]

Sent: Sat Dec 10 18:47:12 2011

Subject: Fwd: The Colbert Report

Should I?

Begin forwarded message:

From: Emily Lazar <emily.lazar@thecolbertreport.org>

Date: December 11, 2011 6:34:17 PM EST

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: The Colbert Report

Hi Professor Bloom-

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We would obviously pay for your travel to New York City and for you hotel accommodations while you're here.

Would this interest you? Can we discuss this further? I'm at 212-649-6226 or email me the best way to get in contact with you by phone.

I hope to hear from you.

All the best,

Emily J. Lazar

Supervising Producer

The Colbert Report

212-649-6226

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:18:26 -0500

To: Lyle Muller <lyle.muller@thegazette.com>

From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: Re: "He Is Risen"

Cc:

Bcc:

X-Attachments:

Lyle,

Thanks for your note.....

I DO recall a banner headline and so does my wife. Perhaps it was in an early edition, or it could have been the Iowa City edition, maybe even it was an ad card at the bottom of a Gazette rack. But since I don't have a copy of that particular paper and ostensibly neither does the Gazette, then it's really not a do-or-die issue. The Atlantic already should have run a fix or correction on that part of the piece.

We've known each other a long time. I've always liked and admired you. I appreciate your professionalism and your journalism instincts. Let's hope when the dust settles, Iowans can civilly discuss the issues I raise without rancor (some of the phone calls and emails I've gotten are pure, unadulterated hatred). But that might not happen for a while, as you suggest. In the meantime, you and I should go out for a beer.

Stay well,

steve

X-SpamScore: 1

X-BigFish: VPS1(z68amz9371I15bfKc85fhzz1202hzz8275bh8275dhz2fh2a8h668h839h61h)

X-Forefront-Antispam-Report:

CIP:65.55.171.153;KIP:(null);UIP:(null);IPV:NLI;H:VA3DIAHUB032.RED001.local;RD:smtp801.microsoftonline.com;EFVD:NLI

From: Lyle Muller <lyle.muller@thegazette.com>

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 15:15:34 -0800

Subject: RE: "He Is Risen"

Thread-Topic: "He Is Risen"

Thread-Index: Acy6rnJotSQKMOF0Tb+faz7H9RzyEwABuv4A

Accept-Language: en-US

acceptlanguage: en-US

It wouldn't have been an Iowa City edition. I had pretty strong reservations about the impact that content would have had on readers and the news value in it; still do.

We've been looking through old files to see if we can find the headline elsewhere because I recall the classroom presentation, plus a couple of other people here thought this sounded familiar. But we cannot find it on any front page, nor features page covers. Perhaps it was a rack card; I don't know.

Oh, well.

Odd, how folks respond with hateful comments. I guess it makes them feel superior in some kind of universe.

And, beers - yes.

Š Lyle

From: stephen bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]

Sent: Wednesday, December 14, 2011 4:18 PM

To: Lyle Muller

Subject: Re: "He Is Risen"

Lyle,

Thanks for your note.....

I DO recall a banner headline and so does my wife. Perhaps it was in an early edition, or it could have been the Iowa City edition, maybe even it was an ad card at the bottom of a Gazette rack. But since I don't have a copy of that particular paper and ostensibly neither does the Gazette, then it's really not a do-or-die issue. The Atlantic already should have run a fix or correction on that part of the piece.

We've known each other a long time. I've always liked and admired you. I appreciate your professionalism and your journalism instincts. Let's hope when the dust settles, Iowans can civilly discuss the issues I raise without rancor (some of the phone calls and emails I've gotten are pure, unadulterated hatred). But that might not happen for a while, as you suggest. In the meantime, you and I should go out for a beer.

Stay well,

steve

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:22:00 -0500

Subject: Re: Hindus in Iowa

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Dear Professor Bloom,

Never having resided in Iowa, I can't really judge the accuracy of your Atlantic article, and will accept your perspective on its face. However, your crack about Hindus in the heartland rang a small bell. Since you've been to all 99 counties in the state, I imagine you've been to Fairfield, Iowa. Isn't there a rather large contingent of Vedic-minded folks there? They may be to mainstream Hinduism what our Lubavitcher friends are to, say, Reform Judaism, but they're kinda Hinduish, right?

Respectfully,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: Katherine Perkins <kperkins@iowapublicradio.org>
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 14:31:22 -0500
Subject: RE: Interview on IPR
Thread-Topic: Interview on IPR
Thread-Index: Acy5AE0I+/glEAzSOeTSUzIgGBndgAA/t9g
Accept-Language: en-US
acceptlanguage: en-US

Stephen,

I certainly understand your hesitation, but we are interested in the same thing, an earnest, smart, prescient discussion. We do screen the calls and we're usually pretty good at weeding out the "crazies." I say all of this because it's certainly a provocative article and one that our listeners are likely to have strong feelings about. I'm just going into our daily producer meeting. I will raise your concerns

Katherine

From: stephen bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2011 1:00 PM
To: Katherine Perkins
Subject: RE: Interview on IPR

Katherine,

I don't want to participate in a call-in show. There are too many crazies out there who aren't rational and would like nothing more than to eat me for lunch. Sorry.

An earnest, smart, prescient discussion I would absolutely do - one that truthfully examines Iowa and its antiquated role as the first presidential referendum in the nation.

But a call-in, no way.

stephen

Stephen,

Phone would work fine. We have an opening on Thursday. The show is live at 10:00 a.m. Central. It is a call-in show hosted by Charity Nebbe. If the date doesn't work, we can try the following week, but we'd like to do it sooner rather than later.

Katherine

From: stephen bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2011 12:21 PM
To: Katherine Perkins

Subject: Re: Interview on IPR

Katherine,

yes.....but i'm teaching at the University of Michigan this year, so we'd have to do a phoner. When would you like to do this? stephen

Stephen -

I am one of the producers for Iowa Public Radio's talk shows. Our staff read, with interest, your article in *The Atlantic*. We wanted to offer you an opportunity to discuss it on Talk of Iowa. Would you be willing?

Katherine Perkins | Producer | Iowa Public Radio

710 S. Clinton St. | Iowa City, IA 52242

T 319.384.0908 | M 515.291.1763 | kperkins@iowapublicradio.org

[REDACTED]

From: Katherine Perkins <kperkins@iowapublicradio.org>
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 15:40:14 -0500
Subject: RE: Interview on IPR
Thread-Topic: Interview on IPR
Thread-Index: Acy5AE0I+/glEAzSOeTSUzIgGBndgADSjVw
Accept-Language: en-US
acceptlanguage: en-US

Stephen,

After some discussion in our daily meeting, here's what we would like to propose. Charity would interview you live or taped, whichever is more convenient, for about 20 minutes. Calls would not be a component of this part of the show. We would play it, and then continue the discussion about Iowa, its culture and its role in the presidential nominating process with a couple of other guests. The rest of the show will be open to calls, as we do expect there to be a lot of interest in the topic. And, we would mention at the conclusion of your interview that you weren't interested in taking calls as part of the discussion. Sound fair?

Katherine

From: stephen bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
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To: Katherine Perkins
Subject: RE: Interview on IPR

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T 319.384.0908 | M 515.291.1763 | kperkins@iowapublicradio.org

[REDACTED]

From: Katherine Perkins <kperkins@iowapublicradio.org>
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 10:36:00 -0500
Subject: RE: Interview on IPR
Thread-Topic: Interview on IPR
Thread-Index: Acy5IK/GhcbBi4yVQXGQ+bHVuJvzCgAiFTww
Accept-Language: en-US
acceptlanguage: en-US

WellŠ OK. The fairest way to do this would be to have you on for the hour with other guests of courseŠ giving you the opportunity to defend your arguments and assertions. But, we also feel it's unfair to discuss our state without giving listeners the chance to weigh in.

We'll likely go ahead and talk about the article. I saw it mentioned on KCRG-TV last night, and I know it's getting a lot of attention here. I think we're planning to talk with a political scientist about what exactly we should be looking for in a state to lead off the presidential nominating processŠ and which states fit that bill. And I know at least one columnist in Iowa plans to write about your piece.

As I say, it's provocative and you've made many assertions about Iowa that I'm sure some of our listeners would like to challenge, and I'm sure some would support (based on what I've seen on Facebook and the comments section under the piece). I appreciate you taking the time to discuss a possible interview with me. I'm sorry you've decided to decline that opportunity. Let me know if you change your mind.

Katherine Perkins | Producer | Iowa Public Radio
710 S. Clinton St. | Iowa City, IA 52242
T 319.384.0908 | M 515.291.1763 | kperkins@iowapublicradio.org

From: stephen bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2011 4:52 PM
To: Katherine Perkins
Subject: RE: Interview on IPR

Katherine,
No, it does not sound fair. Sorry.....

stephen

Stephen,

After some discussion in our daily meeting, here's what we would like to propose. Charity would interview you live or taped, whichever is more convenient, for about 20 minutes. Calls would not be a component of this part of the show. We would play it, and then continue the discussion about Iowa, its culture and its role in the presidential nominating process with a couple of other guests. The rest of the show will be open to calls, as we do expect there

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To: Katherine Perkins

Subject: RE: Interview on IPR

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Subject: Re: Interview on IPR

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[REDACTED]

From: Katherine Perkins <kperkins@iowapublicradio.org>
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 13:40:18 -0500
Subject: RE: Interview on IPR
Thread-Topic: Interview on IPR
Thread-Index: Acy4+tlx8DrtSo8AQUSixHq6Zct7TAAAg/zA
Accept-Language: en-US
acceptlanguage: en-US

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T 319.384.0908 | M 515.291.1763 | kperkins@iowapublicradio.org

DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
d=gmail.com; s=gamma;
h=mime-version:in-reply-to:references:from:date:message-id:subject:to
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b=PeolF2x1t5UzAYtYYVE895wfk/gvB4hOBYi/mTT4DPF0XRWm9rUwDmCjhrIPFCwO7/
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o6mt+8GUxVK3K9eomWRxDFqOAar+q06LwW9R4=

From: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 16:15:48 -0500

Subject: Re: Iowa piece

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

That's really fantastic. I'm so glad you're getting a great response. Thanks for letting me know what interviews you do on this so I can tell our PR team for their records. I'll make these tweaks shortly.

On Mon, Dec 12, 2011 at 4:06 PM, stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:
garance,

talked to the colbert people today....they get back to me by 5 p.m.

lots of media interviews.....everyone seems to want to talk about this piece....

a couple of edits (if you can put the genie back in the bottle for a minute):

- in the paragraph about undocumented immigrants.....should not be every week, but "every month."

- in the paragraph about casinos... "and more are opening as the economy continues to go south and overseas." Take out "are opening" and sub "could open."

- Sioux City is in the state's northwest, not northeast.

That's it...

How are you going on your end in getting this story out?

stephen

--

<http://twitter.com/thegarance>

DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
d=gmail.com; s=gamma;
h=mime-version:in-reply-to:references:from:date:message-id:subject:to
:content-type;
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v9p7LG8wGaEGZYr2vs+ufCfG6Nb+HLP2n/OhY=

From: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>

Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 18:34:04 -0500

Subject: Re: Iowa piece

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

I've asked out PR team to include your story in the daily pitch email we send out tomorrow.

On Mon, Dec 12, 2011 at 5:04 PM, stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:
G,

Let's also cut out the reference to Iowa's population "shrinking so precipitously.." Let's say,
"Iowa's population is shifting; any growth is negligible."

I just talked to the AP for a national story on the wisdom of Iowa holding the first
Presidential referendum, as well as the lead columnist for the Des Moines Register. The
Colbert people are to get back to me today (or so they promise).

I've passed up interviews with the Eastern Iowa ABC affiliate and Iowa Public Radio
station. More to come....

steve

That's really fantastic. I'm so glad you're getting a great response. Thanks for letting me know what
interviews you do on this so I can tell our PR team for their records. I'll make these tweaks shortly.

On Mon, Dec 12, 2011 at 4:06 PM, stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

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open."

- Sioux City is in the state's northwest, not northeast.

That's it....

How are you going on your end in getting this story out?

stephen

--

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--

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DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
d=gmail.com; s=gamma;
h=mime-version:sender:in-reply-to:references:from:date
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bh=OwoBvcrU/SA3mEdig/cxjQ43jgOCX53KJVa5BT8eTQI=;
b=lzy4uW4iHdBrvLbXYaEhwo9ff8KTiIoizw65VkcZCgI9THlpUieSl0BT08d3RUb63J
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35bkGEAY8qdxripf0av41Gy9mm/pWbfRw+ttg=

Sender: <garanceruta@gmail.com>
From: Garance Franke-Ruta <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>
Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 09:13:27 -0500
X-Google-Sender-Auth: WNqAVSDymk_IcaA8COl9ExZEPAs
Subject: Re: iowa, of al places
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

I have not. Still going through it -- it is very long! -- and will send my edits back for a read shortly.

On Fri, Dec 9, 2011 at 8:55 AM, Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

g,
was wondering whether you've put the piece up yet....thx...s

--
Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

--
Garance Franke-Ruta
Senior Editor (Politics), The Atlantic
ph: (202)266-7079
ce: (202)904-5413
gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com
<http://twitter.com/thegarance>

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/>

--
Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: "Munson, Kyle" <kmunson@desmoine.gannett.com>
>To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 11:34:09 -0700
>Subject: Re: Munson from The Register
>Thread-Topic: Munson from The Register
>Thread-Index: Acy5LcVXERnGNwzgRPeU5VJp4Yk1nwAmAfkn
>Accept-Language: en-US
>acceptlanguage: en-US
>

>My column runs tomorrow ... Would you be willing to forward a current
>photo/mug shot? I can't believe it, but we don't have a photo of you in
>the archive!

>Thanks - I'll let you know if I have last-minute questions ...

>Kyle

>On 12/12/11 6:25 PM, "Stephen Bloom" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

>No....just online.... s

>On Dec 12, 2011, at 7:21 PM, "Munson, Kyle"

><kmunson@desmoine.gannett.com> wrote:

>> Steve --

>> Will your article be in the print magazine, too? The January issue?

>> Thanks,

>> Kyle

>> On Dec 12, 2011, at 10:15 AM, "stephen bloom"

>><stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

>>> Kyle,

>>> How about 2 p.m. today?.....I'm teaching at the University of

>>>Michigan this year, but I still root for the Hawkeyes. Here's my

>>>number: [REDACTED] Would that work? steve

>>> Stephen --

>>> Happy holidays from Iowa! Your Atlantic piece has stirred the pot

>>>when it

>>> comes to Iowa caucus-time assessments, to say the least. Would you

>>>have some

>>> time on the phone to chat about this today? Definitely plays into a

>>>wealth

>>> of topics I cover in my column from week to week.

>>> Best,

>>>

>>> --
>>> Kyle Munson
>>> Iowa columnist
>>> The Des Moines Register
>>> 715 Locust St.
>>> Des Moines, IA 50309
>>> Mobile: 515.314.0416
>>> Office: 515.284.8124
>>> Columns - DesMoinesRegister.com/Munson Blog -
>>> DesMoinesRegister.com/KyleMunson Twitter - @KyleMunson Facebook
>>> and YouTube - [/kylemunsonsiowa](http://kylemunsonsiowa)
>>>

[REDACTED]

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>To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 13:14:33 -0700
>Subject: Re: Munson from The Register
>Thread-Topic: Munson from The Register
>Thread-Index: Acy50x0OfIXnRzCzRL2DN/aiTOTUggAALbES
>Accept-Language: en-US
>acceptlanguage: en-US
>
>Thanks, Steve - I would never want to incite violence. I definitely
>want you and your family to be safe. I'm just seeking a constructive
>debate. I do take issue with portions of your article but not with you.
>Stay in touch - Kyle
>
>On 12/13/11 2:09 PM, "stephen bloom" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:
>
>Kyle,
>There's a part of this story that's frightening; I truly hope your
>story isn't simply more kindling. There's already a raging bonfire out
>there.
>
>The level of personal incendiary rancor has gotten to a point I can't
>ignore. Please understand this:
>For the first time in my life of reporting, I am fearful for my
>well-being and the well-being of my family.
>That's not drama, it's the truth.
>
>Welcome to the side of Iowa I wrote about.
>
>I'm not doing more interviews. But here's something I just wrote that
>you're free to use; it summarizes some of our discussion
>yesterday:
>
>"For 40 years as a journalist, I've tried to shine a light into dark
>corners. That's what good journalists do. They don't accept what
>politicians, government bureaucrats, corporate spokespeople say is the
>truth. Good journalism isn't just reporting. It's making observations,
>trying to make sense out of the world and its shadows- even if readers
>don't agree with those observations.
>
>"This lengthy story asks readers to think about the long-term future of
>Iowa. It raises uncomfortable truths rarely discussed - but truths
>that absolutely need to be discussed no matter how difficult it may be
>to do so.
>
>"When my book Postville came out in 2000, I was called some of the most
>hateful names imaginable. Many of my fellow Iowans took issue with me
>and what I reported. Eleven years later, the issues I raised in that
>book- about undocumented workers, pollution, unsafe working conditions,
>sexual abuse, financial irregularities - all have proven true.
>
>"As happened with Postville, over the last several days, I've received
>scores of emails and phone calls, calling me all sorts of hateful
>things. Some of the responses, frankly, are frightening.
>
>"Diversity of opinion is a cornerstone of democratic thought and
>principle. It's what we hold above almost everything else.

>

>"The easiest response to my article is to condemn me and the issues I
>raise. That's a tried-and-true tactic. Kill the messenger, ignore the
>message. That's safe and convenient. But it doesn't get at some of the
>raw, undeniable questions this story poses."

>

>

>

>stephen

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: "Munson, Kyle" <kmunson@desmoine.gannett.com>
>To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 14:01:53 -0700
>Subject: Re: Munson from The Register
>Thread-Topic: Munson from The Register
>Thread-Index: Acy50x0OfIXnRzCzRL2DN/aiTOTUggAB1OKZ
>Accept-Language: en-US
>acceptlanguage: en-US
>
>Steve --
>
> Trying to gauge the scope of the threats: Have you had to file police
>reports, etc.?
>
>Kyle
>
>
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>Thread-Index: Acy50x0OfIXnRzCzRL2DN/aiTOTUggA1QEbj
>Accept-Language: en-US
>acceptlanguage: en-US
>
>Steve --
>
> Just a quick note:
> - Want to make clear and restate that I have nothing against you
>personally - would greet you in the same friendly manner as before this
>whole thing erupted. I would continue to debate Iowa issues,
>journalism, etc. -- but I'd be happy to run into you again in downtown
>Kansas City.
> - I wouldn't have picked the headline applied to today's column, but
>as you know from the biz, writers and columnists often don't write
>their own headlines. Similarly, I didn't have any say in whether the
>column was published on 1A or 1B.
> Our mutual friend Don McLeese has expressed a few views on this whole
>thing on Facebook, and I'd probably agree with all of them.
> Take care,
>
>Kyle
>
>
>
>On 12/13/11 2:09 PM, "stephen bloom" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:
>
>Kyle,
>There's a part of this story that's frightening; I truly hope your
>story isn't simply more kindling. There's already a raging bonfire out
>there.
>
>The level of personal incendiary rancor has gotten to a point I can't
>ignore. Please understand this:
>For the first time in my life of reporting, I am fearful for my
>well-being and the well-being of my family.
>That's not drama, it's the truth.
>
>Welcome to the side of Iowa I wrote about.
>
>I'm not doing more interviews. But here's something I just wrote that
>you're free to use; it summarizes some of our discussion
>yesterday:
>
>"For 40 years as a journalist, I've tried to shine a light into dark
>corners. That's what good journalists do. They don't accept what
>politicians, government bureaucrats, corporate spokespeople say is the
>truth. Good journalism isn't just reporting. It's making observations,
>trying to make sense out of the world and its shadows- even if readers
>don't agree with those observations.
>
>"This lengthy story asks readers to think about the long-term future of
>Iowa. It raises uncomfortable truths rarely discussed - but truths

>that absolutely need to be discussed no matter how difficult it may be
>to do so.

>

>"When my book Postville came out in 2000, I was called some of the most
>hateful names imaginable. Many of my fellow Iowans took issue with me
>and what I reported. Eleven years later, the issues I raised in that
>book- about undocumented workers, pollution, unsafe working conditions,
>sexual abuse, financial irregularities - all have proven true.

>

>"As happened with Postville, over the last several days, I've received
>scores of emails and phone calls, calling me all sorts of hateful
>things. Some of the responses, frankly, are frightening.

>

>"Diversity of opinion is a cornerstone of democratic thought and
>principle. It's what we hold above almost everything else.

>

>"The easiest response to my article is to condemn me and the issues I
>raise. That's a tried-and-true tactic. Kill the messenger, ignore the
>message. That's safe and convenient. But it doesn't get at some of the
>raw, undeniable questions this story poses."

>

>

>

>stephen

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 16:53:34 -0500
To: "Munson, Kyle" <kmunson@desmoine.gannett.com>
From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Re: Munson from The Register
Cc:
Bcc:
X-Attachments:

Kyle,

I have no problem with you. I've always respected, admired and liked you. You'll always be on my "Let's have a beer" list of buddies.....Don't sweat it.....I understand.....steve

Steve --

Just a quick note:

- Want to make clear and restate that I have nothing against you personally - would greet you in the same friendly manner as before this whole thing erupted. I would continue to debate Iowa issues, journalism, etc. -- but I'd be happy to run into you again in downtown Kansas City.

- I wouldn't have picked the headline applied to today's column, but as you know from the biz, writers and columnists often don't write their own headlines. Similarly, I didn't have any say in whether the column was published on 1A or 1B.

Our mutual friend Don McLeese has expressed a few views on this whole thing on Facebook, and I'd probably agree with all of them.

Take care,

Kyle

On 12/13/11 2:09 PM, "stephen bloom" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

Kyle,

There's a part of this story that's frightening; I truly hope your story isn't simply more kindling. There's already a raging bonfire out there.

The level of personal incendiary rancor has gotten to a point I can't ignore. Please understand this:
For the first time in my life of reporting, I am fearful for my well-being and the well-being of my family.
That's not drama, it's the truth.

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I'm not doing more interviews. But here's something I just wrote that you're free to use; it summarizes some of our

discussion yesterday:

"For 40 years as a journalist, I've tried to shine a light into dark corners. That's what good journalists do. They don't accept what politicians, government bureaucrats, corporate spokespeople say is the truth. Good journalism isn't just reporting. It's making observations, trying to make sense out of the world and its shadows- even if readers don't agree with those observations.

"This lengthy story asks readers to think about the long-term future of Iowa. It raises uncomfortable truths rarely discussed - but truths that absolutely need to be discussed no matter how difficult it may be to do so.

"When my book Postville came out in 2000, I was called some of the most hateful names imaginable. Many of my fellow Iowans took issue with me and what I reported. Eleven years later, the issues I raised in that book- about undocumented workers, pollution, unsafe working conditions, sexual abuse, financial irregularities - all have proven true.

"As happened with Postville, over the last several days, I've received scores of emails and phone calls, calling me all sorts of hateful things. Some of the responses, frankly, are frightening.

"Diversity of opinion is a cornerstone of democratic thought and principle. It's what we hold above almost everything else.

"The easiest response to my article is to condemn me and the issues I raise. That's a tried-and-true tactic. Kill the messenger, ignore the message. That's safe and convenient. But it doesn't get at some of the raw, undeniable questions this story poses."

stephen

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: "Munson, Kyle" <kmunson@desmoine.gannett.com>
>To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 09:24:13 -0700
>Subject: Re: Munson from The Register
>Thread-Topic: Munson from The Register
>Thread-Index: Acy46UguUQfmvUOgR6ixV0Foz0okYAAATPc3
>Accept-Language: en-US
>acceptlanguage: en-US
>
>Works great - thanks, Steve! Will call you then.
>
>Kyle
>
>
>On 12/12/11 10:15 AM, "stephen bloom" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:
>
>Kyle,
>How about 2 p.m. today?.....I'm teaching at the University of Michigan
>this year, but I still root for the Hawkeyes. Here's my
>number: [REDACTED] Would that work? steve
>
>_____
>
>Stephen --
>
> Happy holidays from Iowa! Your Atlantic piece has stirred the pot
>when it comes to Iowa caucus-time assessments, to say the least. Would
>you have some time on the phone to chat about this today? Definitely
>plays into a wealth of topics I cover in my column from week to week.
> Best,
>
>--
>Kyle Munson
>Iowa columnist
>The Des Moines Register
>715 Locust St.
>Des Moines, IA 50309
>Mobile: 515.314.0416
>Office: 515.284.8124
>Columns - DesMoinesRegister.com/Munson
>Blog - DesMoinesRegister.com/KyleMunson Twitter - @KyleMunson Facebook
>and YouTube - /kylemunsonsiowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED]
>To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Re: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
>Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 14:02:14 -0600

>
>that's great stuff. i liked the ending about the dog, my parents
>bought a lab, though neither of them hunt, and several of my friends
>from high school couldn't get over it. "what do they do with that dog,
>just pet it?" ha! but you did fail to mention [REDACTED] !
>
>have a good Christmas (you've been here long enough, so i've assumed
>you've just started celebrating it!).
>
>hope all's well in Iowa City, and i'll talk to you soon.

>
[REDACTED]
>
>
>
>
>
>
>On Dec 9, 2011, at 7:12 PM, Stephen Bloom wrote:

>
>>Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't
>>arrived yet; I may need some.
>>
>>[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-a](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/)
>>nd-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/
>>
>>steve
>>--

[REDACTED]

>From: '[REDACTED]'
>To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 22:21:58 -0500
>Subject: RE: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
>Thread-Topic: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
>Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
>Accept-Language: en-US
>acceptlanguage: en-US

>
>Finally sat down and read this tonight. I absolutely loved it. LOVED
>it. You put me smack in the middle of that state and captured
>everything. I can't tell you how many times I stopped in the story and
>was like TOTALLY!!! The money, religion, the knobby, two-fingered
>salute when you drive by. Loved it, loved it, loved it.
>GREAT color.

>
>With that, I shared the piece with a few of my Iowa-born best friends
>from college and they were, as expected, sensitive about it.

>
>[REDACTED] liked it quite a bit and also found several spots where she was
>like -- OH MY GOD HE NAILED IT. The only quibble she had was with the
>graph about the only people who stay around are waiting to die, etc.
>and those with Little Orphan Annie. But again, she's sensitive to it as
>well.

>
>I'm curious what the response has been like AND how things are in Ann
>Arbor. Drop me a line or give me a buzz sometime.

>
>_____
>From: Stephen Bloom [stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
>Sent: Friday, December 09, 2011 8:12 PM
>Subject: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

>
>Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't
>arrived yet; I may need some.

>
>[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-an](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/)
>d-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/

>
>steve
>--

>
>Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 14:15:38 -0500
Subject: Re: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]
x-aol-global-disposition: G
DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

X-AOL-SCOLL-SCORE: [REDACTED]
X-AOL-SCOLL-URL_COUNT: 0
x-aol-sid: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] and I did enjoy it! We liked your observations, and it brought back memories of our first year in Iowa City (1962-63). At that time Philip Roth wrote an article "Iowa, a place you just can't call home" (or something like that) which appeared in *Esquire*. Among his observations, he talked about food so much is produced in Iowa, but restaurant choices are limited. Restaurants have long menus but virtually all offerings are steak. "And anyone, except for a small child or an Englishman can cook a steak." The best meals were in homes.....Iowa women by default have become better cooks than they intended to be. He also railed about campus cops and parking tickets.

Great job, Steve, especially the East-West political divide. A marvelous appraisal of Steve King!

I've not seen the recent *Press Citizen* which denounced your observations.

Enjoy Michigan, we look forward to seeing you when you return to Iowa City.

Warmest regards,
[REDACTED]

In a message dated 12/9/2011 7:12:39 P.M. Central Standard Time, stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu writes:
Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't arrived yet; I may need some.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/>

steve

-



Attachments:

bloom shirt.jpg

>From: RAYGUN <contact@raygunsite.com>
>To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Re: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 15:15:09 -0600
>
>hey Steve,
>
>you're burning up the presses here in Iowa! do you own stock in
>Gannett or something? you're really increasing their web traffic.
>
>and we may make the attached shirt inspired by the article!
>
>are you back in IAC next semester? if so, we'll meet up sometime.
>
>mike
>
>
>
>
>
>
>
>
>
>On Dec 9, 2011, at 7:12 PM, Stephen Bloom wrote:
>
>>Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't
>>arrived yet; I may need some.
>>
>>[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-a](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/)
>>nd-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/
>>
>>steve
>>--

[REDACTED]

>

>From: Stephen Bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]

>

>

>

>

>

X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 12:05:49 -0800
Subject: Re: My take on Iowa and the Caucuses
From: [REDACTED]
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Steve,

I read every word of the article. You are a brilliant craftsman of the English language.
My advice to you would be to avoid all men in pick-up trucks who are covered head to toe in camouflage or orange clothing with a chewing tobacco pouch in their bottom lip. At least until the first buck of the new year darts by.
A great read, my friend. Happy Holidays from the left coast.

[REDACTED]
On Fri, Dec 9, 2011 at 5:35 PM, Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:
Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't arrived yet; I may need some.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/>

steve

--

[REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: Re: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

X-MB-Message-Source: WebUI

From: <[REDACTED]>

X-MB-Message-Type: User

X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 13:35:06 -0500

x-aol-global-disposition: G

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

X-AOL-SCOLL-SCORE [REDACTED]

X-AOL-SCOLL-URL_COUNT: 0

x-aol-sid: [REDACTED]

Hi, Steve! I just wanted to send you a quick note -- I've seen the Facebook rants against your piece, but I can't quite figure out what all the furor is over! I mean, I love my home state, but I'm absolutely part of the brain drain -- as is pretty much my entire family. And I do love me a good casserole, I believe Jello should be classified as a salad and I will never forget my first job in Florida when I was laughed at for asking where the pop machine was!

Obviously, I come from a place of love when I think about my days spent detassle-ing (well, maybe love is too a strong word) and can totally picture my own farmer grandfather offering the two finger salute, but people have to realize how wacky Iowa must look from the outside -- I mean quotes from Republican caucus-goers, the return of Terry Branstad, the tiny towns that make up most of the state. Trust me, I have been to southern Iowa, and it ain't pretty.

Certainly, there are many things to love about Iowa and I do enjoy getting back now and then. My parents were both born in Iowa -- my mom grew up on a farm near [REDACTED] and my dad in [REDACTED] -- and they're both about as liberal as it gets, so my views may be a little skewed. But I will never forget watching my grandparents, my mom and my dad (who was definitely in hell) killing chickens on the farm when I was a young girl. I scolded my grandmother saying, "I saw what you did to that little chicken and I will never forget it!" I know this because my grandmother told me this story at least once a year until she died. (Somehow, this did not cause me to become a vegetarian, however.) Hunting and farming ARE a part of Iowa, like it or not. So is great education, beautiful land, an easy, friendly way of life, pork tenderloins at the state fair and, of course, Hawkeye football. That may sound lame to some people, but it just feels like home to me.

But you weren't wrong. Iowa is what it is. And it can be looney tunes, for sure. I just hope you're not taking too hard a beating!

Best,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

To: Recipient List Suppressed;

Sent: Fri, Dec 9, 2011 6:12 pm

Subject: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't arrived yet; I may need some.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/>

steve

--

[REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED]
>To: 'Stephen Bloom' <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: RE: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
>Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 18:03:42 -0800
>Thread-Index: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>
>I am spitting -- laughing so hard at the ending. Inspired ending!
>
>Just wonderful!
>
>HOW IS MICHIGAN? Hope it's great, because they're not letting you back
>into Iowa! (How long is the gig?)
>
>LOVE LOVE LOVE! [REDACTED]
>
>
>

>-----Original Message-----

>From: Stephen Bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
>Sent: Friday, December 09, 2011 5:12 PM
>To: Recipient List Suppressed:
>Subject: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
>
>Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't
>arrived yet; I may need some.
>
>[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-an](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/)
>d-rel igion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/
>
>steve
>--

--
Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: Re: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

X-MB-Message-Source: WebUI

From: [REDACTED]

X-MB-Message-Type: User

X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]

Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 21:10:38 -0500

x-aol-global-disposition: G

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

X-AOL-SCOLL-SCORE: [REDACTED]

X-AOL-SCOLL-URL_COUNT: 0

x-aol-sid: [REDACTED]

Very impressive, Professor Bloom -- I looking forward to printing out and reading this weekend.

[REDACTED]

-----Original Message-----

From: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

To: Recipient List Suppressed;

Sent: Fri, Dec 9, 2011 5:12 pm

Subject: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't arrived yet; I may need some.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/>

steve

--

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 22:09:58 -0500

From: [REDACTED]

Subject: Re: My take on Iowa and the Caucuses

To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Stephen, thanks for this article...It amplifies the following comments I sent to a number of friends about the strange need for these republican candidates to say the dumbest things to attract these caucus votes.

What is wrong with the people in Iowa that the republicans resort to the most inane and awful campaign tactics to attract their votes? Did you guys hear the Romney supporter on Chris Matthews program trying to defend the Mittster calling Obama an appeaser because he offered to meet with Ahmadinejad? She completely dismissed all Obama's other efforts in going after AlQaeda leaders & Kadaffi and imposing strict sanctions against Iran and Syria and preventing the UN from giving statehood to the Palestinians. I would have liked Chris or David Korn to have asked her if Reagan or Nixon were appeasers for having summit talks with the Russian premiers during the cold war.

On the other hand I, like several people on this morning's Joe program including Barnicle, was actually surprised at Bachmann's appearance the day before. [REDACTED], calm down....I didn't say that I like her or support anything she says but on this occasion, she handled herself very well and came off as a skillful "politician" and supported her positions in an intelligent manner. Today was interesting because of the way Donald Deutch attacked Trump on the phone after saying that they are good friends and that he likes Trump. This is going to be some election campaign...I hope that Obama is going to be prepared to respond to all the negative bombshells that the Newster will heave at him during the debates, if he gets that far...As much as the White House spokesman is denying that they are thinking about it, I would hope that his staff is already working on this situation.

On Dec 9, 2011, at 8:35 PM, Stephen Bloom wrote:

Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't arrived yet; I may need some.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/>

steve

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--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

>X-IronPort-Anti-Spam-Filtered: true
>X-IronPort-Anti-Spam-Result:
>AqgAABDp407Poj7G/2dsb2JhbABAAw6aM5A+gQWBcgEBAQEDOK8CAQgRBAEBCxQQMh0IAgQ
>TCBGHd6tGiQWITol8YwSmYTc
>From: [REDACTED]
>To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: RE: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
>Thread-Topic: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
>Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
>Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 23:22:59 +0000
>Accept-Language: en-US
>x-originating-ip: [REDACTED]
>

>Steve,
>Great story. Hope all is going well for you and yours. We need to chat
>sometime. My cell is [REDACTED] should you want to be in touch. My
>book on noodling is coming out in the Spring.

>Cheers,

>[REDACTED]

>

>

>From: Stephen Bloom [stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
>Sent: Friday, December 09, 2011 7:12 PM
>Subject: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
>

>Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't
>arrived yet; I may need some.

>

>[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-an](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/)
>d-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/

>

>steve

>--

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: "Foley, Ryan J." <RJFoley@ap.org>
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: RE: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
Thread-Topic: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
Thread-Index: AQHMTtjOOoo/nefR3kqZLzmzVsGhJXYo1tAgABoWICAAllFsA=
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 14:06:19 +0000
Accept-Language: en-US
x-originating-ip: [10.1.134.207]

Hey Steve,

My piece about your article and the ensuing reaction in Iowa is scheduled to hit the wire later today. Seems like things have taken on a life of their own since we talked. How are you hanging in there, and is there anything else you want to add? Have you gotten death threats?

And second, is there a picture that you can send us so that we can use with the story?

Thanks,

Ryan

From: stephen bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2011 3:13 PM
To: Foley, Ryan J.
Subject: RE: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

Ryan,

I have a little time now.....You could call me at [REDACTED] steve

Hey Steve,

As predicted, you've stirred up a hornet's nest. Are you free to talk about your piece and the fallout this afternoon at all? We might be interested in following up.

And other than the comments on the Atlantic site, are you getting much other pushback?

I'm at 319-337-5615.

Thanks,

Ryan

Ryan J. Foley
Correspondent, The Associated Press
103 E. College St, Suite 208
Iowa City, IA 52240
319-337-5615 (office)
319-400-2213 (mobile)

319-337-6126 (fax)

@rjfoley (twitter)

The Associated Press, founded in 1848, has more than 8,500 subscribers globally. Distributing text, audio, video, graphics and photos to more than 15,000 news outlets, AP has a daily reach of 1 billion people worldwide.

-----Original Message-----

From: Stephen Bloom [<mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>]

Sent: Friday, December 09, 2011 7:12 PM

Subject: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

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<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/>

steve

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[IP_US_DISC]

msk dccc60c6d2c3a6438f0cf467d9a4938

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

[REDACTED]

From: "Foley, Ryan J." <RJFoley@ap.org>
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: RE: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
Thread-Topic: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
Thread-Index: AQHMTtjOOoo/nefR3kqZLzmzVsGhJXYo1tAgABoWICAAIfsIAAV32A//+sbEA=
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 14:18:49 +0000
Accept-Language: en-US
x-originating-ip: [10.1.134.207]

Sounds good, Steve.

From: Stephen Bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, December 14, 2011 8:18 AM
To: Foley, Ryan J.
Subject: RE: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

Ryan,

Phew!!!!

Yes I have more to say. But I won't be in my office till noon today. I'll send you a foto then, and maybe we can talk.
O.K.???? s

Hey Steve,

My piece about your article and the ensuing reaction in Iowa is scheduled to hit the wire later today. Seems like things have taken on a life of their own since we talked. How are you hanging in there, and is there anything else you want to add? Have you gotten death threats?

And second, is there a picture that you can send us so that we can use with the story?

Thanks,

Ryan

From: stephen bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
Sent: Monday, December 12, 2011 3:13 PM
To: Foley, Ryan J.
Subject: RE: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

Ryan,

I have a little time now.....You could call me at ([REDACTED]) steve

Hey Steve,

As predicted, you've stirred up a hornet's nest. Are you free to talk about your piece and the fallout this afternoon at all? We might be interested in following up.

And other than the comments on the Atlantic site, are you getting much other pushback?

I'm at 319-337-5615.

Thanks,

Ryan

Ryan J. Foley

Correspondent, The Associated Press

103 E. College St, Suite 208

Iowa City, IA 52240

319-337-5615 (office)

319-400-2213 (mobile)

319-337-6126 (fax)

@rjfoley (twitter)

The Associated Press, founded in 1848, has more than 8,500 subscribers globally. Distributing text, audio, video, graphics and photos to more than 15,000 news outlets, AP has a daily reach of 1 billion people worldwide.

-----Original Message-----

From: Stephen Bloom [<mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>]

Sent: Friday, December 09, 2011 7:12 PM

Subject: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't arrived yet; I may need some.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/>

steve

--

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and delete this email. Thank you.

[IP_US_DISC]

msk dccc60c6d2c3a6438f0cf467d9a4938

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

>X-HDC-Scanned: Yes

>Date: Sun, 11 Dec 2011 22:59:44 -0500

>Subject: Re: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>Thread-Topic: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

>Thread-Index: [REDACTED]

>

>Wow am I glad still to be on your radar. What a marvelous piece, Steve

>and how I wish someone as brilliant as you would write something like

>this on every state. It would be required reading.

>

>My friend [REDACTED] is at the Atlantic. Did you run into her by

>chance.

>

>And, what are you up to next??

>

[REDACTED]

>

>

>On 12/9/11 8:12 PM, "Stephen Bloom" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

>

>> Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't

>> arrived yet; I may need some.

>>

>>

>>[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-a](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/)

>>nd-relig

>> ion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/

>>

>> steve

X-RC-FROM: [REDACTED]
X-RC-RCPT: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Re: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
From: [REDACTED]
Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 09:31:20 -0600
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

But her idea of doing every state is "BRILLIANT", no?

On Dec 12, 2011, at 6:20 AM, Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

This is an opening....i should respond to her with our proposal

Begin forwarded message:

From: [REDACTED]
Date: December 11, 2011 10:59:44 PM EST
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Re: My take on Iowa and the caucuses

Wow am I glad still to be on your radar. What a marvelous piece, Steve and how I wish someone as brilliant as you would write something like this on every state. It would be required reading.

My friend [REDACTED] is at the Atlantic. Did you run into her by chance.

And, what are you up to next??

[REDACTED]

On 12/9/11 8:12 PM, "Stephen Bloom" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't arrived yet; I may need some.

[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-relig
ion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/)

steve

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 20:29:39 -0500
Subject: Re: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
Thread-Topic: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
Accept-Language: en-US
acceptlanguage: en-US

Can't wait to dig in.

This is so funny. [REDACTED] was actually reading it on her iPhone on the way home from dinner and raving when I got your email. Said you "nailed it." And she's native.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

----- Reply message -----

From: "Stephen Bloom" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Fri, Dec 9, 2011 7:13 pm
Subject: My take on Iowa and the caucuses
To:

Thought you'd enjoy. My order of Kevlar clothing, though, hasn't arrived yet; I may need some.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/>

[steve](#)

==

[Please consider the environment before printing this e-mail.](#)

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 18:28:19 -0500

Subject: Re: My take on Iowa

From: [REDACTED]

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

OK. I saw you getting hammered. So I broke every journalistic rule to ignore the comments and rose to defend you.

[REDACTED]

On Fri, Dec 9, 2011 at 6:04 PM, [REDACTED] wrote:

Uh ohŠ Got it up on the screen now. I'm liking it so far. Are the Iowans taking offense? At least you're safe in MichiganŠ

[REDACTED]

On Fri, Dec 9, 2011 at 5:59 PM, stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

Thought you'd enjoy....

My order of Kevlar clothing hasn't arrived yet....but I think I might need it.

steve

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/>

--

Stephen G. Bloom

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Department of Communication Studies

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Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 18:02:13 -0500

Subject: Re: My take on Iowa

From: [REDACTED]

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Oh, cool! I'm running out to a cocktail party, and will read it later. And I'll send it to [REDACTED] with this handy shortened url: <http://bit.ly/vP7dkw>

Can't wait to read it!

[REDACTED]


On Fri, Dec 9, 2011 at 5:59 PM, stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

Thought you'd enjoy....

My order of Kevlar clothing hasn't arrived yet....but I think I might need it.

steve

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/>



>Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 17:04:27 -0600

>To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>From: Jeffrey Denburg <jeffrey-denburg@uiowa.edu>

>Subject: Re: My take on Iowa

>X-Originating-IP: [128.255.62.21]

>

>congratulations. I will read it this weekend.

>

>

>

>>Thought you'd enjoy....

>>My order of Kevlar clothing hasn't arrived yet....but I think I might

>>need it.

>>steve

>>

>><http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-a>

>>nd-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/

[REDACTED]

>X-RC-FROM: [REDACTED]
>X-RC-RCPT: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Re: My take on Iowa
>From: [REDACTED]
>Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 17:15:29 -0600
>To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>We're on our way out the door. Congrats. I'll read it tomorrow.

>
[REDACTED]

>
>
>
>
>On Dec 9, 2011, at 4:59 PM, stephen bloom wrote:

>
>> Thought you'd enjoy....
>> My order of Kevlar clothing hasn't arrived yet....but I think I
>>might need it.
>> steve
>>
>>
>>[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-a](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/)
>>nd-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/
>>

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 13:31:17 -0500

Subject: Re: My take on Iowa

From: [REDACTED]

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Just read your piece, and I'm sure you'll need that Kevlar. One of my goals when writing stories about communities, people, change -- and you have way more experience at it than me -- is that you try to show the subject(s) something they didn't already know about themselves. You did that with this article. A lot of people are going to get way pissed. I'm sure they already have. Let 'em. In some 3,500 words you encapsulated what Iowa truly is: tragic. Not in a pitiful or condescending sense. But in ways much more profound, and more importantly, compelling. Maybe that's why you continue to live in Iowa -- it's just too damned interesting to leave. Even though everyone else calls it boring.

(One more good thing: I love the purposeful delay of the last line. Everyone knew why you were writing the story, and that the piece lacked a cohesive nutgraf allowed a much more satisfying conclusion.)

Congrats on getting the Atlantic -- oh, hallowed jewel of freelance journalism.

[REDACTED]

On Fri, Dec 9, 2011 at 5:59 PM, stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

Thought you'd enjoy....

My order of Kevlar clothing hasn't arrived yet....but I think I might need it.

steve

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/>

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 18:46:54 -0600

Subject: Re: My take on Iowa

From: [REDACTED]

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

You now have a cornfed commenter on your side! And I'm doing well. Currently the "social media intern" at [REDACTED] running their social media accounts and dabbling in the world of business reporting (not my cup of tea). Post-internship is TBD, but I still have a couple of months to plot my next move. The plan is to stay in Chicago, so we'll see what happens!

How does Michigan compare to Iowa?

On Fri, Dec 9, 2011 at 5:15 PM, stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:
thanks, [REDACTED]...you might want to post your comment below on the Atlantic.com responses, since i'm getting ravished and pummeled (as usual)....

still in Michigan for another semester, then back to IC....

How are you doing???? s

Perfect timing -- I just finished it! Swept away in the writing as usual. And as someone who grew up in the middle of those cornfields, I can assure you that you nailed it. Bravo!

Are you back from Michigan yet?

[REDACTED]

Sent from my iPhone

On Dec 9, 2011, at 4:59 PM, stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

> Thought you'd enjoy....

> My order of Kevlar clothing hasn't arrived yet....but I think I might need it.

> steve

>

> <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from->



--

Stephen G. Bloom

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Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: Mark Blumberg <mark-blumberg@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Re: My take on Iowa
Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 23:42:14 -0600
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
X-Originating-IP: [128.255.62.21]

Ouch. Good thing you're in Michigan. Let me know if you want me to drive by your house to check for broken windows.

Mark

On Dec 9, 2011, at 4:59 PM, stephen bloom wrote:

Thought you'd enjoy....
My order of Kevlar clothing hasn't arrived yet....but I think I might need it.
steve

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/>

Mark S. Blumberg, Ph.D.
F. Wendell Miller Professor
Editor-in-Chief, *Behavioral Neuroscience*
Member, *The Iowa Delta Center*

Departments of Psychology and Biology
E11 Seashore Hall
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

Office: 319.335.2424
Lab: 319.335.3975
Fax: 319.335.0191

--
Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 07:24:10 -0600

Subject: Re: My take on Iowa

From: [REDACTED]

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

That is a great read Steve -- insightful and thought-provoking with great humor mixed in all of the right places.

[REDACTED]

P.S. My wife and I get the same kind of comments about our beagle, [REDACTED] when we walk him around the neighborhood. One guy even asked my wife if our dog was fixed because he'd "like to breed him."

On Fri, Dec 9, 2011 at 4:59 PM, stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

Thought you'd enjoy....

My order of Kevlar clothing hasn't arrived yet....but I think I might need it.

steve

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/>

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Subject: Re: My take on Iowa
>From: Laura Young <le-young@uiowa.edu>
>Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 09:49:00 -0600
>To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>X-Originating-IP: [128.255.62.21]
>
>Enjoyed it!
>
>Sent from my iPhone
>
>On Dec 9, 2011, at 4:59 PM, stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:
>
>> Thought you'd enjoy....
>> My order of Kevlar clothing hasn't arrived yet....but I think I
>>might need it.
>> steve
>>
>>
>>[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-a](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/)
>>nd-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 13:35:40 -0500

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>Subject: Re: My take on Iowa

>X-CubMail-Sender: [REDACTED]

>X-No-Spam-Score: Local

>

>Steve,

>

>Wow. . . that's the Iowa I know from living there just one year.

>That's the best thing on the state I've ever read, and I read a lot for
>my book.

>

>I hope all is well in Michigan. I forget. . . you there for the year,

>or half? I hope the year. Last night was a big one for me: I finished a

>full draft of my WWII book. I'm heading back to Cali in a week. . .

>going to burrow in and bring that book home. I'm going to deliver at
>the end of January.

>

>I hope the Kevlar duds come in time before the hit squads come to Michigan.

>

[REDACTED]

>

>

>Quoting stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>:

>

>>Thought you'd enjoy....

>>My order of Kevlar clothing hasn't arrived yet....but I think I might

>>need it.

>>steve

>>

>>[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-a](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/)

>>nd-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED]

>Subject: Re: My take on Iowa

>Date: Sun, 11 Dec 2011 04:54:14 -0500

>To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Rabbi,

> Thanks for the memories.

> When we lived on the edge of Downtown in Des Moines, [REDACTED]

>reminded me we were warned not to go walking behind our house during

>hunting season. At other times, we had to be alert for bow and arrow

>sharp shooters out to bag an authorized a wandering deer for an

>authorized bounty,

> You won't need that vest in the UI journalism building. The

>faculty won't come across your brilliant vivid portrait because it

>appears in a popular mainstream magazine.

> If you ever have to pack up in Iowa City, you can come to

>Connecticut where the lethal vessels are not bullets, but narrow minded

>gossip. Of course, our new state isn't without religious bias. One New

>Yorker who moved here reports she left a few years ago after one more

>slight. A fellow country club member in Avon remarked to her husband

>about the new green dress she was wearing.:

>"Look at the Jew girl all dressed up for Christmas."

> Congratulations to [REDACTED] and our best to [REDACTED].

>

>Sent from my iPad

>

>On Dec 9, 2011, at 5:59 PM, stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

>

>> Thought you'd enjoy....

>> My order of Kevlar clothing hasn't arrived yet....but I think I

>>might need it.

>> Steve

>>

>>

>><http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-a>

>>nd-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: "[REDACTED]"
>To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: RE: My take on Iowa
>Thread-Topic: My take on Iowa
>Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
>Date: Sun, 11 Dec 2011 14:46:04 -0600
>Accept-Language: en-US
>
>Professor Bloom, Congratulations on getting published in the Atlantic!
>Let's hope you won't need the Kevlar--- [REDACTED]
> _____ From: Bloom, Stephen G
>Sent: Friday, December 09, 2011 4:59 PM Subject: My take on Iowa
>Thought you'd enjoy.... My order of Kevlar clothing hasn't arrived
>yet....but I think I might need it. steve
>[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-an](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/)
>d-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED]
>To: 'stephen bloom' <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: RE: My take on Iowa
>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:58:15 -0600
>Thread-Index: [REDACTED]

>
>I definitely, totally, enjoyed the article. And you are so correct on
>everything you printed. (After reading the comments, perhaps my age
>has something to do with my attitude and approval.) A few things about
>Iowa surprised me and entertained me. And the Chinese commentary really
>surprised me.

>
>By the way, what do they hunt in Michigan ??

>
>OH - I noticed in the byline, "Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray
>Professional Scholar at the University of Iowa." And "Howard R. Marsh
>Visiting Professor of Journalism at the University of Michigan." Great
>credentials. You know I'm your biggest fan, but I didn't catch the
>titles before.

[REDACTED]

>
>P.S. The comments go on and on and on. To me that verifies a great
>article. Some interesting reading there.

>
>And, yes, order the EXTRA reinforced Kevlar

[REDACTED]

>
>-----Original Message-----

>From: stephen bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
>Sent: Friday, December 09, 2011 5:00 PM
>To: Recipient List Suppressed:
>Subject: My take on Iowa

>
>Thought you'd enjoy....
>My order of Kevlar clothing hasn't arrived yet....but I think I might
>need it.
>steve

>
>[http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-an](http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/clinging-to-guns-and-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/)
>d-religion-observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/4/

--
Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

(b) (7)(C), (b) (7)(D)

[REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED]

>Subject: Re: Observations from 20 Year
>From: [REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 23:29:21 -0600

>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>I enjoyed the "Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life" piece that you
>wrote for the Atlantic. I'm not sure what makes it controversial. Maybe
>other people need to develop some thicker skin.

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: Mark Blumberg <mark-blumberg@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Re: oh my...
Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 09:59:03 -0600
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
X-Originating-IP: [128.255.62.21]

Some of the reaction is terrible. Stay safe.

M

On Dec 15, 2011, at 7:36 AM, Stephen Bloom wrote:

i am under siege. a total campaign of hate. even branstadt weighed in.
amazing what a little truth will get you.

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

Mark S. Blumberg, Ph.D.
F. Wendell Miller Professor
Editor-in-Chief, *Behavioral Neuroscience*
Member, *The Iowa Delta Center*

Departments of Psychology and Biology
E11 Seashore Hall
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

Office: 319.335.2424
Lab: 319.335.3975
Fax: 319.335.0191

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

>X-RC-FROM: [REDACTED]
>X-RC-RCPT: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Re: Oops!
>From: [REDACTED]
>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 11:44:21 -0600
>To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>
>Yup. [REDACTED] ran into [REDACTED]. He's pissed.

>
>
>
>
>
>On Dec 13, 2011, at 11:32 AM, stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:
>
>> it's getting very ugly.
>>

Subject: Re: Professor Stephen G. Bloom

From: [REDACTED]

Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 01:36:43 -0600

CC: <mcdonald@theatlantic.com>

To: <mark-braun@uiowa.edu>, [REDACTED]
<stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>, <rgreen@dmreg.com>, <branstad@governor.iowa.gov>

Yet an additional fallacy of the article....had it been fact-checked - Iowa foreclosures are near the lowest if not the lowest in the nation, from the Financial Times.

The guy was just making up as he went along. Someone needs to take him to task, for publishing such a poorly researched piece, as do the editors of The Atlantic for their carelessness.

On Dec 13, 2011, at 4:51 AM, [REDACTED] wrote:

>

>

> Begin forwarded message:

>

>> From: [REDACTED]

>> Date: December 13, 2011 4:47:58 AM CST

>> To: "mcdonald@atlantic.com" <mcdonald@atlantic.com>, "mark-braun@uiowa.edu" <mark-braun@uiowa.edu>, [REDACTED] "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>, "rgreen@dmreg.com" <rgreen@dmreg.com>, branstad@governor.iowa.gov

>> Subject: Professor Stephen G. Bloom

>>

>>

>> Dear Editor, The Atlantic:

>>

>>> And 'bud' for boys under 14 . . . the guy is living in fantasy land. It's been said, I'm sure, but it certainly not a linguistic trait. He's simply trying to pull one over on you guys, because you can't check the facts. If you're a reputable publishing organization, you'll take him to task for it.

>>>

>>> Iowa, as has long been the case, also ranks as the fourth 'smartest' state in the nation, ahead of CT, NJ, and well ahead of CA and gasp ... New York.

>>>

>>> Really, quite sad you let such stuff be printed. A readership clinging to its 1960s ideas and limousine liberal view of the world, to paraphrase our learned President.

>>>

>>> Here's a source that actually does its homework:

>>>

>>> <http://www.mainstreet.com/slideshow/lifestyle/smarest-dumbest-states>

>>>

>>> If this were race or ethnic prejudice, or distortion, the University would intercede and require an apology, if not discipline. But not from a liberal, poorly schooled, but politically correct faculty member.

>>>

>>> Copy to: President, University of Iowa

>>> Governor, State of Iowa
>>> Vice President and Chief Editor, News, Des Moines Register

>>>

>>> [REDACTED]

>>> Sent from my iPad

>>>

>>> On Dec 13, 2011, at 4:12 AM, [REDACTED] wrote:

>>>

>>>> Typos and all, could you kindly forward this email to the Editor of the magazine, as well as the editor of the particular article by Mr. Bloom.

>>>>

>>>> [REDACTED]

>>>> Sent from my iPad

>>>>

>>>> Begin forwarded message:

>>>>

>>>>> From: [REDACTED]

>>>>> Date: December 13, 2011 3:33:10 AM CST

>>>>> To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>>>>> Cc: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

>>>>> Subject: Re: Just ignorant--your AM "puff" piece

>>>>>

>>>>> Were I still in New Haven, and amongst Harold Bloom friends and colleagues, I'd be tempted to write a counter-point piece to your musings, appropriately entitled "Narrative as Bullshit."

>>>>>

>>>>> Because only a fiction writer could turn a state ranked with the nation's fourth best mental health into one where you'd think farmers were living through a second dust bowl. What a prejudiced, ignorant jerk you are. Fourth highest mental health in the nation....and you attempt to take one mental health statistic and paint it as though, well, it had the mental health record of the average person living on the street on Telegraph Avenue. Doesn't the Atlantic use fact checkers (major depressive disorders, schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, etc. etc.). Like taking the death rate from skin cancer in Arizona amongst Scandinavian-ancestry long-term residents and claiming Arizona has some of the worst cancer rates in the nation.

>>>>>

>>>>> Really. Piled high and deep. Can we treat you to a year of real work, shoveling it on the farm, instead of in print?

>>>>>

>>>>>

>>>>>

>>>>> [REDACTED]

>>>>> Sent from my iPad

>>>>>

>>>>> On Dec 13, 2011, at 3:14 AM, [REDACTED] wrote:

>>>>>

>>>>>> Steve,

>>>>>>

>>>>>> I read your atlantic piece.

>>>>>>

>>>>>> All I can say is that for someone so well educated, you are dumb as a rock. Really. That blunt. No way around it. Probably a sort of self-hating view that you could "only" get tenure at Iowa, but you can show that you can still hold your nose high, as you pass the hard-working farmers who put food on your table and are the largest source of exports the country has -- the most efficient farm system in the world is in Iowa.

>>>>>>

>>>>>> I could go through your article piece by piece, and pick it apart. I checked, for example, the most recent study of the National Mental Health Association. Iowa's suicide rate is in the middle, and they rate as fourth in the nation in overall mental health, next to Hawaii (I could go into the criteria, but clearly you try to create a very selective

>>>>>>

>>>>>>

>>>>>>

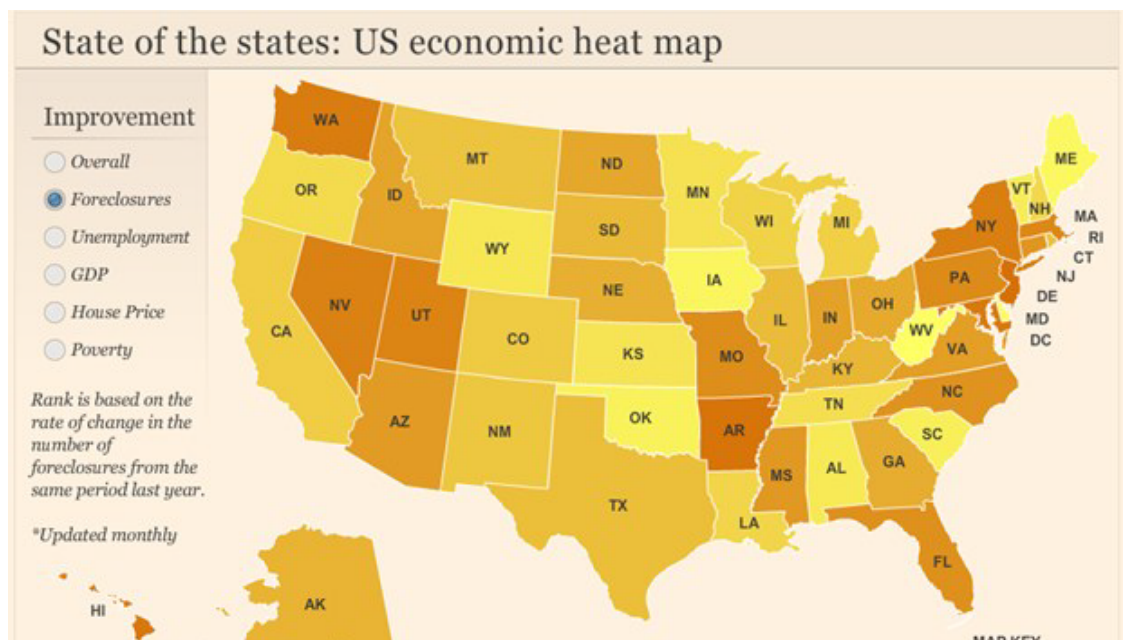
>>>>>>

>>>>>>

>>>>>>

 \succ

The guy was just making up as he went along. Someone needs to take him to task, for publishing such a poorly researched piece, as do the editors of The Atlantic for their carelessness.



[REDACTED]

From: <James.Kelleher@thomsonreuters.com>
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 19:43:27 +0000
Subject: RE: Question from Reuters
Thread-Topic: Question from Reuters
Thread-Index: Acy6mAZe1CIqv3uSTWWV6elsld7isgAAJW/w
Accept-Language: en-US, en-GB
acceptlanguage: en-US, en-GB

Great. Many thanks.

.....
James B. Kelleher

National Correspondent, Reuters America Service

Thomson Reuters

312 408-8130 (o)

312 636-8835 (m)

E-mail: james.kelleher@reuters.com

Twitter: windycityreuter

Facebook: James Kelleher-Reuters

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From: stephen bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]

Sent: Wednesday, December 14, 2011 1:39 PM

To: Kelleher, James (M Edit Ops)

Subject: Re: Question from Reuters

Here are two statements.....

"For 40 years as a journalist, I've tried to shine a light into dark corners. That's what good journalists do. They don't accept what politicians, government bureaucrats, corporate spokespeople say is the truth. Good journalism isn't just reporting. It's making observations, trying to make sense out of the world and its shadows- even if readers don't agree with those observations.

"This lengthy story asks readers to think about the long-term future of Iowa. It raises uncomfortable truths rarely discussed - but truths that absolutely need to be discussed no matter how difficult it may be to do so.

"When my book *Postville* came out in 2000, I was called some of the most hateful names imaginable. Many of my fellow Iowans took issue with me and what I reported. Eleven years later, the issues I raised in that book- about undocumented workers, pollution, unsafe working conditions, sexual abuse, financial irregularities - all have proven true.

"As happened with *Postville*, over the last several days, I've received hundreds of emails and phone calls, calling me all sorts of hateful things. Some of the responses, frankly, are frightening.

"Diversity of opinion is a cornerstone of democratic thought and principle. It's what we hold above almost everything else."

"The easiest response to my article is to condemn me and the issues I raise. That's a tried-and-true tactic. Kill the messenger, ignore the message. That's safe and convenient. But it doesn't get at some of the raw, undeniable questions this story poses.

"Perhaps my article gave some Iowans a moment to refocus their attention elsewhere - from some of the *real* issues confronting the state - Wal-Mart taking over the retail-trade sector, empty storefronts, water pollution among the worst in the nation, factories shutting down, the state's brain drain, undocumented workers taking minimum-wage jobs in the state's under-regulated slaughterhouses, not to mention the tragedy that anyone can see walking into the state's 17 casinos.

"I'm a proud journalist. I still believe in the adage, 'Comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable.' Today, much of the state is afflicted by a ravaged economy. Iowa's population growth has flat-lined. But I guess it's just more comforting to some Iowans to condemn me for pointing out these issues and others. Sorry if I offended, but that's the real job of journalism. Or it should be."

Good afternoon, Professor Bloom. James Kelleher here in the Chicago bureau of Reuters news agency.

My editors have asked me to write a brief story about the kerfuffle over your piece about Iowa that appeared late last week on the website of The Atlantic magazine.

I've read the piece -- and will of course quote from it.

But I see from stories in the Des Moines Register et al that you have put out a statement reacting to some of your critics, some of whom I will be quoting.

Would you be so kind as to send me a copy of your statement?

Many thanks in advance.

JBK

.....

James B. Kelleher

National Correspondent, Reuters America Service

Thomson Reuters

312 408-8130 (o)

312 636-8835 (m)

E-mail: james.kelleher@reuters.com

Twitter: windycityreuter

Facebook: James Kelleher-Reuters

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DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
d=patch.com; s=google;
h=mime-version:in-reply-to:references:date:message-id:subject:from:to
:content-type;
bh=QebupO0o1+catmGaxPBHVfOCObLTU1C93LNFcCGZWn4=;
b=jCWNDp1ftiB63yPmNptUlgsnl oGHGOi2tXLB4uYpGsLBXp5ZpN1jSIFoKD0H5Bm4c5
RmBCGEk6cWvuXHyRjLf9pWzmOkbI5ACe02eI1PFmP7sb1CCPIOuOiRzyvPV+h48ebjFK
Hf+dOACgX6kXpskljihtYgudtJD6FVVtF5Xc=
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 14:24:29 -0600
Subject: Re: quick questions for article
From: Brian Morelli <brian.morelli@patch.com>
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Ok. Thanks. Sounds like the responses are crossing into Ellen Lewin territory.

I am writing an editorial. I'll send you a link when it's posted. Perhaps Monday.

On Wed, Dec 14, 2011 at 1:41 PM, stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:
brian,

nothing that has merited calling the police....but the emails are not pleasant. Here's a typical one I just received:

YOU SOB---what is your problem--if you dislike IOWA so much--get your ass out. Someone in your position should not be speaking the way you do about the state so many of us love .A lot of us have risked our lives and some have given their lives so you talk that way. But that doesn't mean we won't kick your ASS in front of all your family if you keep it up.

Hi Prof. Bloom.

Kyle Munson of the Register describes in his words for the "first time in his career he was worried for his family's safety, was frightened by the "raging bonfire" of dissent."

My question: are you receiving threats and if so what are they and how are you getting them?

--

Brian Morelli

Associate Regional Editor, Iowa

Patch.com

[\(319\) 594-2435](tel:(319)594-2435)

brian.morelli@patch.com

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--

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john.hoeft@patch.com

Patch 

[REDACTED]

From: Jonathan Ahl <jahl@iowapublicradio.org>
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 15:08:37 -0500
Subject: RE: response
Thread-Topic: response
Thread-Index: Acy50J7QcFwXwee4S6WYhbqPytK8OgAAUEtQ
Accept-Language: en-US
acceptlanguage: en-US

Mr. Bloom,

The Iowa you wrote about exists. No doubt about it. But there is also a substantial Iowa that exists that would believe what you are going through is wrong and objectionable. By not talking to us, we let the Iowa you write about (and which I believe is in the minority in this state) win.

That said, I have also received a death threat at my home in a previous job. I understand doing what's right might not be worth the risk.

Be well,

Jonathan

Jonathan Ahl | News Director | Iowa Public Radio
2111 Grand Avenue, Suite 100 | Des Moines, IA 50312
T 515.725.1702 | F 515.725.1714 | iowapublicradio.org

From: stephen bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2011 1:51 PM
To: Jonathan Ahl
Subject: response

Jonathan,

I don't like my decision, either. I hate it, in fact.

And I completely understand your point. I'd be writing the same email that you've written if I were in your shoes.

But the level of personal incendiary rancor is something I can't ignore. Please understand this:

It's gotten to the point where for the first time in my life of reporting, I am fearful for my well-being and the well-being of my family.

That's not drama, it's the truth.

Welcome to the Iowa I wrote about.

stephen

Mr. Bloom:

Our producer, Katherine Perkins passed along your note to me, and I felt somewhat compelled to respond.

You close by saying the you hope we understand your decision. We do. No one enjoys what can be the hate-filled diatribes that come from people (often anonymous) that are an unfortunate byproduct of journalism, analysis, well-informed opinion and speaking the truth that is inherent in what we do. I received a few of those calls in the past 20 minutes. There will be more. It's part of what we do, and quite frankly, it sucks. It's unfair. It's not right.

So yes, we understand. However that understanding does not mitigate our disappointment in our decision. We are disappointed because we are not those people casting hate-filled diatribes at you. We are not the ones who are threatening you. We are not the people causing you damage. Furthermore, we have offered a level of protection and consideration that goes above and beyond because we understand your situation. We seek a higher level of discourse that gets to the real issues of which you write, without spewing venom. Yet you will still not speak to us about your work. In short, you have convicted us for the sins of others. And for someone who has built his career and life's passion to speaking truth, you of all people should be aware how patently unfair that is. It's unfair to us, and it's unfair to the listeners of Iowa Public Radio.

I understand your points and respect your decision. But I don't like it. I hope you understand my point.

Sincerely,

Jonathan

Jonathan Ahl | News Director | Iowa Public Radio
2111 Grand Avenue, Suite 100 | Des Moines, IA 50312
T 515.725.1702 | F 515.725.1714 | iowapublicradio.org

From: stephen bloom [<mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>]

Sent: Tuesday, December 13, 2011 11:25 AM

To: Katherine Perkins

Subject: Re: Another idea for interview with IPR

Katherine,

The tenor of the responses I have received in response to the article have sunk so low that I simply can't go on the show. I've been called all sorts of hateful things. And they're not just directed at me, but my family.

So, this is what I suggest. Below is a response I'd like to be read on air. I'd ask that this be read in its entirety.

It's a shame that I have to do this. It's not how I have ever responded to a request for a free and open discussion. But I fear now is not the time for such a healthy exchange of ideas.

I hope you understand. I am sorry.

stephen

"For 40 years as a journalist, I've tried to shine a light into dark corners. That's what good journalists do. They don't accept what politicians, government bureaucrats, corporate spokespeople say is the truth. Good journalism isn't just reporting. It's making observations, trying to make sense out of the world and its shadows- even if readers don't agree with those observations.

"This lengthy story asks readers to think about the long-term future of Iowa. It raises uncomfortable truths rarely discussed - but truths that absolutely need to be discussed no matter how difficult it may be to do so.

"When my book *Postville* came out in 2000, I was called some of the most hateful names imaginable. Many of my fellow Iowans took issue with me and what I reported. Eleven years later, the issues I raised in that book- about undocumented workers, pollution, unsafe working conditions, sexual abuse, financial irregularities - all have proven true.

"As happened with *Postville*, over the last several days, I've received scores of emails and phone calls, calling me all sorts of hateful things. Some of the responses, frankly, are frightening.

"Diversity of opinion is a cornerstone of democratic thought and principle. It's what we hold above almost everything else.

"The easiest response to my article is to condemn me and the issues I raise. That's a tried-and-true tactic. Kill the messenger, ignore the message. That's safe and convenient. But it doesn't get at some of the raw, undeniable questions this story poses."

Stephen -

Would you be willing to do the interview if all listener feedback came from social media? Facebook, Twitter and email. Then we would have the chance to see the comments and forward on the valid, rational arguments without all the emotion?

Katherine Perkins | Producer | Iowa Public Radio

710 S. Clinton St. | Iowa City, IA 52242

T 319.384.0908 | M 515.291.1763 | kperkins@iowapublicradio.org

DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
d=gmail.com; s=gamma;
h=mime-version:in-reply-to:references:from:date:message-id:subject:to
:content-type;
bh=4A1KjvbX2OYxMoleR3NI/v+dbdgX8On9bo347AsgYbg=;
b=mdx0z35L3Zph26smlS4sVIWHh9PmrI3acp1voClpFxZS2Wh+8XM1H8cniKJKIcbnKg
UKfdH3PvF2DaW7Wsd5oN5l/Oh+LisyiVqTaJFWM3/kQgauufNbhmhFg8H1Bhyx+GJx5j
pNozR+wMfuzBbnNV8Wegi6khyN8n/OrMRBiIw=

From: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>

Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 17:00:38 -0500

Subject: Re: Rural

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Done!

On Fri, Dec 9, 2011 at 4:58 PM, stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:
garance,

the piece is beginning to churn out some visceral responses!!!

per our first phone conversation, the headline might be misleading.....I live in Iowa City for 20 years,
which isn't really rural. maybe we take *rural* out of the hed?

stephen

--

<http://twitter.com/thegarance>

From: "Charis Carlson, Jeff" <jcharisc@iowacity.gannett.com>
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:22:58 -0700
Subject: RE: statement
Thread-Topic: statement
Thread-Index: Acy6n7W5FhXfVkjUSl26C/AB5izl6wAH90lQ
Accept-Language: en-US
acceptlanguage: en-US

Thanks, Stephen. I think many of our online readers have seen excerpts of them already in other publications, but I'll run them on Friday's Opinion page.

Jeff

From: stephen bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, December 14, 2011 2:34 PM
To: Charis Carlson, Jeff
Subject: statement

Jeff,

I'm swamped with requests, as well as incendiary emails.....

But here are two statements. You can use all, any, or none. Good luck with the piece!

stephen

"For 40 years as a journalist, I've tried to shine a light into dark corners. That's what good journalists do. They don't accept what politicians, government bureaucrats, corporate spokespeople say is the truth. Good journalism isn't just reporting. It's making observations, trying to make sense out of the world and its shadows- even if readers don't agree with those observations.

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"Diversity of opinion is a cornerstone of democratic thought and principle. It's what we hold above almost everything

else."

"The easiest response to my article is to condemn me and the issues I raise. That's a tried-and-true tactic. Kill the messenger, ignore the message. That's safe and convenient. But it doesn't get at some of the raw, undeniable questions this story poses.

"Perhaps my article gave some Iowans a moment to refocus their attention elsewhere - from some of the *real* issues confronting the state - Wal-Mart taking over the retail-trade sector, empty storefronts, water pollution among the worst in the nation, factories shutting down, the state's brain drain, undocumented workers taking minimum-wage jobs in the state's under-regulated slaughterhouses, not to mention the tragedy that anyone can see walking into the state's 17 casinos.

"I'm a proud journalist. I still believe in the adage, 'Comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable.' Today, much of the state is afflicted by a ravaged economy. Iowa's population growth has flat-lined. But I guess it's just more comforting to some Iowans to condemn me for pointing out these issues and others. Sorry if I offended, but that's the real job of journalism. Or it should be."

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Sullivan: Real observations from 20 years of Iowa life
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 06:03:05 -0600
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Good luck. We hope your colleagues and friends are supportive. In our time, most deserted us--including family.

If not, Iowans have a long memory, but a short attention span. They will want to be "friends" again soon, even though they have done and said egregious things.

Concerning threats: I would not worry too much--most are cowards. However, I hope your children are grown. Iowans like to attack the weak link.

Finally, you have one important advantage: You are smarter than most all of your detractors.

[REDACTED]

On Dec 13, 2011, at 8:06 PM, Stephen Bloom wrote:

[REDACTED],

Thank you! I am appalled by the reaction my article has generated. I have received hateful emails and telephone calls. Some people have gone as far as threatening me AND MY FAMILY. I guess that's the part of Iowa I was writing about in the piece. I deeply appreciate your words of encouragement and support at this time....

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

December 14, 2011

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

RE: Sullivan: Real observations from 20 years of Iowa life

Dear Mr. Sullivan:

The idea that you think visiting the family farm is being in touch with ". . . *rural Iowans*" is laughable, but more importantly destructive to Professor Bloom. You spout half baked ideas of an indulgent twenty year old. Contrary to your assertion, Iowa City is not Iowa and an occasional visit to Preston is not understanding Iowa.

I would note that most males in rural United States (much less Iowa) don't trust a man without a penknife.

I'd suggest you visit a high school graduation party--they are easy to find---just look for the pickups, the open garage doors, and the smell of Cheesy Potatoes if you think rural cuisine is edible.

And if you think guns and religion aren't just about number 1 in the "*Country*" (yes that is Country with a capital C, and yes you want to draw out the "ooouunn"), just stop by Preston during deer shotgun season #1 or #2. Remember to wear your orange vest and Elmer Fudd hat.

I'd give you about six weeks in rural Iowa before you were either asked to leave or you fled.



--

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 14:01:58 -0500
To: Charity Nebbe <cnebbe@iowapublicradio.org>
From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Re: "Talk of Iowa"
Cc:
Bcc:
X-Attachments:

Charity,

Threats made to me are O.K. But when I get threats and inventive that involve my family, I draw the line. Sorry.

Perhaps my article gave some Iowans a moment to refocus their attention elsewhere - from some of the *real* issues confronting the state - Wal-Mart taking over the retail-trade sector, empty storefronts, water pollution among the worst in the nation, factories shutting down, the state's brain drain, undocumented workers taking minimum-wage jobs in the state's underregulated slaughterhouses, not to mention the tragedy that anyone can see walking into the state's 17 casinos. I'm a proud journalist. I still believe in the adage, "Comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable." Today, much of the state is afflicted by a ravaged economy. Iowa's population growth has flat-lined. But I guess it's just more comforting to some Iowans to condemn me for pointing out these issues and others. Sorry if I offended, but that's the real job of good journalism. Or it should be.

You are free to use any of this for your show.....

stephen

Stephen G. Bloom
Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan
734.615.4038

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

Hello Professor Bloom,

This is the last time we will bother you, but as host of "Talk of Iowa" I wanted to reach out to you and ask you, once again, to be on our program. Tomorrow we will dedicate the entire hour to the statewide discussion launched by your article. I would really love for you to be a part of the conversation. I believe that public radio is one of the places in the media landscape today where people with opposing viewpoints can come together and have a civil discussion. Where we respect our guests and listeners enough to allow people to make their case, share their ideas and advance the conversation. In my 17 years on the air I have never asked a guest a disrespectful question, and I have interviewed many people with whom I do not agree. You raise some very important issues in your article that don't fit into the bucolic story many of us like to tell about our state. Your article was provocative and I can see why

many people took offence, but I'm hoping that the result of this will be an open and honest discussion of what our state is and isn't in 2011.

Here is what I propose. I will interview you for the first 12 minutes of the program. It can be live or pre-taped. I am available today between 12:30 and 3pm to do a taped interview. After our conversation I will be joined by Kyle Munson of the Des Moines Register and Jennifer Wilson, author of "Running Away to Home" and we will open the phones. The focus of the conversation following your interview will be, "What story do you think needs to be told about Iowa in 2011?"

Thank you for your consideration.

Charity Nebbe

Charity Nebbe | Host | Iowa Public Radio

710 S. Clinton St. | Iowa City, IA 52240

319-335-5267 | <http://www.iowapublicradio.org/>

>DKIM-Signature:

>From:

>Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 21:41:37 -0600

>To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>A defining characteristic of the Midwest is aversion to risk. You said
>things that were risky to say in that article, some things that people
>who have grown up in the Midwest do agree with. If only more people
>from around here were willing to take risks.

>

>Glad I could brighten your day. Things will get better!

>

>--sent from my iPhone

>

>On Dec 15, 2011, at 9:25 PM, Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

>

>> [REDACTED],

>> At a trying time like now, while I'm inundated with hate mail, I
>>can't fully express my gratitude for your kind words. You can't fully
>>know how much I appreciate them. Thank you.

>>

```
>> stephen
```

>> People are a little too touchy. You wrote your mind, good job.

>>The inaccuracies are too bad, but good to take a controversial stance.

>>Somebody should shake up the midwest sometimes.

>>

>>

>> --

>>

DKIM-Signature: v=1; a=rsa-sha256; c=relaxed/relaxed;
d=gmail.com; s=gamma;
h=mime-version:in-reply-to:references:from:date:message-id:subject:to
:content-type;
bh=PCbng+UBrxz6xpooPqn3Vsc8Zw/EDm0nTUtC8PraRI=;
b=G4MRZzjrH6vcqJ7jKqTe1Ws6wub0h2mO+51sZNTOIrcq3VKogwwbluNBGZePIBEYBZ
dTMzqBSwHpFuEm0+ejnzbcBEvTYogGsX7aBnLeBkpxvQkUI1zFxIVJprhHeqW6E2fkUu
ZRb3heJq8KySINTipIb5d+OsR+eu2dwwhWOTg=

From: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>

Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 19:14:30 -0500

Subject: Re: The Colbert Report

To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>, Natalie Raabe

<nraabe@theatlantic.com>, Bob Cohn <bcohn@theatlantic.com>

That's fantastic! I think it would be great to have you on the Colbert Show caucuses day to talk about Iowa and your Atlantic politics story. Looping in Atlantic Media's communications leader Natalie Raab and Atlantic Digital editorial director Bob Cohn as well.

Congrats!

Garance

On Sat, Dec 10, 2011 at 7:05 PM, Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

Garance,

The story is going viral. Check out below.....

Any thoughts?

stephen

Begin forwarded message:

From: Emily Lazar <emily.lazar@thecolbertreport.org>

Date: December 11, 2011 6:34:17 PM EST

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: The Colbert Report

Hi Professor Bloom-

I'm a producer working with Comedy Central's Stephen Colbert. I'm writing to see if I could discuss with you being a guest on The Colbert Report on Tuesday, January 3, the day of the Iowa Caucuses.

This would be a 6 minute one on one conversation shot live to tape in front of an audience in New York City.

We'd like you to talk with Stephen about Iowa and the character of the people who get to launch our electoral process. (We realize you're in Michigan this year.)

We would obviously pay for your travel to New York City and for you hotel accommodations while you're here.

Would this interest you? Can we discuss this further? I'm at [212-649-6226](tel:212-649-6226) or email me the best way to get in contact with you by phone.

I hope to hear from you.

All the best,

Emily J. Lazar
Supervising Producer
The Colbert Report
[212-649-6226](tel:212-649-6226)

--

<http://twitter.com/thegarance>

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: Mark Blumberg <mark-blumberg@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Re: The Colbert Report
Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 18:24:21 -0600
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
X-Originating-IP: [128.255.62.21]

I've been reading the comments on your article. You've really struck a nerve -- thus the Colbert invite, I imagine.

It's an incredible opportunity. Keep me apprised, please.

M

On Dec 10, 2011, at 6:00 PM, Stephen Bloom wrote:

Should I? s

Begin forwarded message:

From: Emily Lazar <emily.lazar@thecolbertreport.org>
Date: December 11, 2011 6:34:17 PM EST
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: The Colbert Report

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Emily J. Lazar
Supervising Producer
The Colbert Report
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Mark S. Blumberg, Ph.D.
F. Wendell Miller Professor
Editor-in-Chief, *Behavioral Neuroscience*
Member, *The Iowa Delta Center*

Departments of Psychology and Biology
E11 Seashore Hall
University of Iowa
Iowa City, Iowa 52242

Office: 319.335.2424
Lab: 319.335.3975
Fax: 319.335.0191

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

X-RC-FROM: <[REDACTED]>
X-RC-RCPT: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: The Colbert Report
Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 18:55:52 -0600
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

ARE YOU KIDDING? OF COURSE YOU SHOULD DO IT. WOW. FUCKING STEPHEN COLBERT.
EMAIL HIM, CALL HIM, KNOCK ON HIS DOOR.

NOW!

Holy shit Popeye!

■

On Dec 10, 2011, at 5:51 PM, Stephen Bloom wrote:

Should I?

Begin forwarded message:

From: Emily Lazar <emily.lazar@thecolbertreport.org>
Date: December 11, 2011 6:34:17 PM EST
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: The Colbert Report

Hi Professor Bloom-

I'm a producer working with Comedy Central's Stephen Colbert. I'm writing to see if I could discuss with you being a guest on The Colbert Report on Tuesday, January 3, the day of the Iowa Caucuses.

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I hope to hear from you.

All the best,

Emily J. Lazar
Supervising Producer
The Colbert Report
212-649-6226

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: Mark Blumberg <mark-blumberg@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Re: The Colbert Report
Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 19:49:35 -0600
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
X-Originating-IP: [128.255.62.21]

Perfect timing. Well done.

If you end up in NYC around then, I will delay my trip home to enjoy the festivities with you. I wouldn't want to miss this.

Mark

On Dec 10, 2011, at 7:45 PM, Stephen Bloom wrote:

m,
the only thing that'd stop me would be an invite to the daily show.
the story is going viral, so who knows where it'll stop. i'd be a rube to colbert, a foil to his trashing iowa, but that's the national narrative and there's good reason for it.
my only (niggling) concern is actually based on the comments you emailed me. i really hate being so hated. but, i guess, when it comes to iowa, that's my lot in life. i stepped into it.
ironically, i submitted this piece to AT LEAST 40 places before the Atlantic bit. I even agreed to cut it from 7,500 to 600 words for politico.com, and after i did, they rejected it. Ha!
i'd fly to nyc jan. 2, so we could meet.....s

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

Mark S. Blumberg, Ph.D.
F. Wendell Miller Professor
Editor-in-Chief, *Behavioral Neuroscience*
Member, *The Iowa Delta Center*

Departments of Psychology and Biology
E11 Seashore Hall
University of Iowa

Iowa City, Iowa 52242

Office: 319.335.2424

Lab: 319.335.3975

Fax: 319.335.0191

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

Subject: RE: The Colbert Report
Date: Sun, 11 Dec 2011 18:59:42 -0500
Thread-Topic: The Colbert Report
Thread-Index: Acy3mqQxMyMuNUVDQbK3L3/9r9BmsgAxjzRg
From: "Raabe, Natalie" <nraabe@theatlantic.com>
To: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>, Stephen Bloom
<stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>, "Cohn, Bob" <bcohn@theatlantic.com>

Wonderful news! Please keep us posted.

From: Garance Franke-Ruta [mailto:garanceruta@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, December 10, 2011 7:15 PM
To: Stephen Bloom; Raabe, Natalie; Cohn, Bob
Subject: Re: The Colbert Report

That's fantastic! I think it would be great to have you on the Colbert Show caucuses day to talk about Iowa and your Atlantic politics story. Looping in Atlantic Media's communications leader Natalie Raab and Atlantic Digital editorial director Bob Cohn as well.

Congrats!

Garance

On Sat, Dec 10, 2011 at 7:05 PM, Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

Garance,

The story is going viral. Check out below.....

Any thoughts?

stephen

Begin forwarded message:

From: Emily Lazar <emily.lazar@thecolbertreport.org>
Date: December 11, 2011 6:34:17 PM EST
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: The Colbert Report

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All the best,

Emily J. Lazar
Supervising Producer
The Colbert Report
[212-649-6226](tel:212-649-6226)

--

<http://twitter.com/thegarance>

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: Emily Lazar <emily.lazar@thecolbertreport.org>
To: 'Stephen Bloom' <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: RE: The Colbert Report
Date: Mon, 12 Dec 2011 12:33:05 -0500
Thread-Index: AQGjUITHaa4yMvRT5AENfwVVNa+cAAFBz4MGliE0/6A=

OK. I'll call you then or shortly there after. Thanks.

From: Stephen Bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
Sent: Saturday, December 10, 2011 8:20 PM
To: Emily Lazar
Subject: Re: The Colbert Report

Emily,

This sounds great....I'm traveling right now, but let's talk to nail this down Monday morning. I'll be in my office at 11 a.m. The number is: 734.615.4038. O.K.? stephen

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

Hi Professor Bloom-

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I hope to hear from you.

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Emily J. Lazar
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The Colbert Report
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--

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Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: Mark Blumberg <mark-blumberg@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Re: The Colbert Report
Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 18:03:44 -0600
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
X-Originating-IP: [128.255.62.21]

You better! Jesus!

But please say something nice about Iowa. For your sake. And can you drop my name, too?

M

On Dec 10, 2011, at 6:00 PM, Stephen Bloom wrote:

Should I? s

Begin forwarded message:

From: Emily Lazar <emily.lazar@thecolbertreport.org>
Date: December 11, 2011 6:34:17 PM EST
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: The Colbert Report

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Office: 319.335.2424
Lab: 319.335.3975
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--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:40:03 -0500

Subject: Re: Updating your story

From: Franke-Ruta Garance <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Thread-Topic: Updating your story

Thread-Index: Acy6sVG5fDWmZa0++UWOrQ6qoobE7A==

I don't want to make this substantial a change since this is not what you recall, and until I know for sure that there was no other edition I can't argue with your memories. Open reflection, I'd like to go with this:

When my family and I first moved to Iowa, my wife and I recall, our first Easter morning the second-largest newspaper in the state (the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*) had this headline splashed across Page One of the edition we got in Iowa City: HE HAS RISEN. The headline broke all the rules I was trying to teach my young journalism students: the event was neither breaking nor could it be corroborated by two independent sources. An archived edition of the paper shows it with a verse from Matthew 28:5-6 above-the-fold on Page One, along with an illustration of three crosses. The front-page verse (which in its entirety read, "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said.") took up two columns and was played against a story about the murders of six people in the Iowa town of Norwalk.

On 12/14/11 5:21 PM, "stephen bloom" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

above-the-fold on Page One, along with an illustration that showed three crosses. The front-page verse (which in its front-page entirety read, "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said.") took up two columns and was played against a story about the murders of six people in the Iowa town of Norwalk.

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 19:00:55 -0500
Subject: Re: Updating your story
From: Franke-Ruta Garance <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Thread-Topic: Updating your story
Thread-Index: Acy6vJ2+T0Rmr0Xe0kmsSLaUVoGBow==

With corrections appended:

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/observations-from-20-years-of-iowa-life/249401/>

On 12/14/11 5:21 PM, "stephen bloom" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

gotta scram now, so will read later.....In the below fix, obviously we can delete the first mention of "front-page" (before verse).....thanks....steve

Thanks.

Here's our first set of responses - we tried to select the more thoughtful, Atlantic-ky passages, and to quote also your responses.

<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/iowans-respond-to-stephen-bloom/249991/>
<http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2011/12/iowans-respond-to-stephen-bloom/249991/>

On 12/14/11 4:29 PM, "stephen bloom" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

Garance,

Agreed.

I DO recall the banner headline and so does my wife. It could have been in an early edition, or it could have been the Iowa City edition of the Cedar Rapids Gazette, but do remember it.

But since I don't have a copy of that particular paper and ostensibly neither does the Gazette, your suggestion is a good one. But let's not use the phrase "splashed across Page One."

Let's say:

Mathew 28:5-6 "above-the-fold on Page One, along with an illustration that showed three crosses. The front-page verse (which in its front-page entirety read, "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said.") took up two columns and was played against a story about the murders of six people in the Iowa town of Norwalk."

Actually, I think this is stronger than the original.....stephen

Hi Stephen,

I'm about to go through and aggressively moderate the comments, but before I do I need to correct this passage in light of the revelations at the link below:

"When my family and I first moved to Iowa, our first Easter morning I read the second-largest newspaper in the state (the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*) with this headline splashed across Page One: HE HAS RISEN. The headline broke all the rules

I was trying to teach my young journalism students: the event was neither breaking nor could it be corroborated by two independent sources. The editors obviously thought that everyone knew who He was, and cared."

<http://thegazette.com/2011/12/14/heres-the-gazettes-easter-sunday-front-page-in-1994/>
< <http://thegazette.com/2011/12/14/heres-the-gazettes-easter-sunday-front-page-in-1994/> > <http://thegazette.com/2011/12/14/heres-the-gazettes-easter-sunday-front-page-in-1994/> > <<http://thegazette.com/2011/12/14/heres-the-gazettes-easter-sunday-front-page-in-1994/>>

[Here's my proposed revision:](#)

["When my family and I first moved to Iowa, our first Easter morning I read the second-largest newspaper in the state \(the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*\) and saw a passage from Matthew 28:5-6 splashed across Page One. The religious passage broke all the rules I was trying to teach my young journalism students: the event was neither breaking nor could it be corroborated by two independent sources."](#)

[As well, our social media editor has collected a series of responses to your piece, and we plan to run them with a short editorial note. And then some other folks, such as the former editor of the Iowa Independent, have also filed responses, which we'd like to run as part of having a dialog on the piece, which to date has drawn more than 172,000 page views. I can't really show you the aggregation piece before we run it because it is in Storify, but I can give you an advance look at the rest.](#)

Thanks,
Garance

--

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Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

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The University of Iowa

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:10:37 -0500
Subject: Re: Updating your story
From: Franke-Ruta Garance <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Thread-Topic: Updating your story
Thread-Index: Acy6rTUbK/4RpiZ1YEuC4gCoITYBvQ==

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<<http://thegazette.com/2011/12/14/heres-the-gazettes-easter-sunday-front-page-in-1994/>>

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Thanks,
Garance

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:21:59 -0500

To: Franke-Ruta Garance <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>

From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: Re: Updating your story

Cc:

Bcc:

X-Attachments:

gotta scram now, so will read later.....In the below fix, obviously we can delete the first mention of "front-page" (before verse).....thanks.....steve

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Agreed.

I DO recall the banner headline and so does my wife. It could have been in an early edition, or it could have been the Iowa City edition of the Cedar Rapids Gazette, but do remember it.

But since I don't have a copy of that particular paper and ostensibly neither does the Gazette, your suggestion is a good one. But let's not use the phrase "splashed across Page One."

Let's say:

Mathew 28:5-6 "above-the-fold on Page One, along with an illustration that showed three crosses. The front-page verse (which in its front-page entirety read, "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said.") took up two columns and was played against a story about the murders of six people in the Iowa town of Norwalk."

Actually, I think this is stronger than the original.....stephen

Hi Stephen,

I'm about to go through and aggressively moderate the comments, but before I do I need to correct this passage in light of the revelations at the link below:

"When my family and I first moved to Iowa, our first Easter morning I read the second-largest newspaper in the state (the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*) with this headline splashed across Page One: HE HAS RISEN. The headline broke all the rules I was trying to teach my young journalism students: the event was neither breaking nor could it be corroborated by two independent sources. The editors obviously thought that everyone knew who He was, and cared."

<http://thegazette.com/2011/12/14/heres-the-gazettes-easter-sunday-front-page-in-1994/>
<<http://thegazette.com/2011/12/14/heres-the-gazettes-easter-sunday-front-page-in-1994/>>

Here's my proposed revision:

"When my family and I first moved to Iowa, our first Easter morning I read the second-largest newspaper in the state (the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*) and saw a passage from Matthew 28:5-6 splashed across Page One. The religious passage broke all the rules I was trying to teach my young journalism students: the event was neither breaking nor could it be corroborated by two independent sources."

As well, our social media editor has collected a series of responses to your piece, and we plan to run them with a short editorial note. And then some other folks, such as the former editor of the Iowa Independent, have also filed responses, which we'd like to run as part of having a dialog on the piece, which to date has drawn more than 172,000 page views. I can't really show you the aggregation piece before we run it because it is in Storify, but I can give you an advance look at the rest.

Thanks,
Garance

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 16:29:56 -0500

To: Franke-Ruta Garance <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>

From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: Re: Updating your story

Cc:

Bcc: [REDACTED]

X-Attachments:

Garance,

Agreed.

I DO recall the banner headline and so does my wife. It could have been in an early edition, or it could have been the Iowa City edition of the Cedar Rapids Gazette, but do remember it.

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Thanks,
Garance

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:32:53 -0500

Subject: Re: Updating your story

From: Franke-Ruta Garance <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Thread-Topic: Updating your story

Thread-Index: Acy6sFFsyxVkhFJTikSm42s4F/pnUA==

For your talking points: your piece has gotten more than 3,000 likes on Facebook.

On 12/14/11 5:21 PM, "stephen bloom" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

above-the-fold on Page One, along with an illustration that showed three crosses. The front-page verse (which in its front-page entirety read, "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said.") took up two columns and was played against a story about the murders of six people in the Iowa town of Norwalk.

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 21:57:53 -0500
Subject: Re: What say you?
From: Franke-Ruta Garance <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Thread-Topic: What say you?
Thread-Index: Acy6lQqIacF3bPOFRFqjdvF+3jPedwAAEwJt

You know, I realized that Iowa uniquely among states is subjected to quadrennial and intense praise from powerful figures in American life. Which doubtless makes your criticism seem that much more unusual.

On 12/14/11 9:55 PM, "stephen bloom" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:
Our clarification makes this point re. the front page reference to "He has risen" in an effective way. I'm uncertain what he means when he suggests that other newspapers "will continue to report" on the "larger issues" I identify.

S

On Dec 14, 2011, at 9:18 PM, Franke-Ruta Garance <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com> wrote:

----- Forwarded Message

From: Lyle Muller <lyle.muller@thegazette.com <<mailto:lyle.muller@thegazette.com>> >
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:59:33 -0800
To: "Franke-Ruta, Garance" <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com <<mailto:gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>> >
Subject: Stephen Bloom article -- "He is Risen"

Dear Ms. Franke-Ruta:

Thank you for correcting the record about what The Gazette printed on an Easter Sunday front page that Stephen Bloom referred to in his Atlantic essay about Iowa. No headline stating "He is Risen" was spread across any Easter Sunday front page of The Gazette between 1986 and 2006, according our archives. The headline would not have appeared in one edition of the newspaper but not the ones in our archives.

The Gazette reference in the article is a small one given the scope of the ultimate message being conveyed in the Bloom piece. Plenty in the article exists about which to dispute but truths also exists about which the people of this state - of which I am a native - need to consider.

Sadly, the article's sarcastic tone and need to address an error detract for the moment from larger issues that Bloom identifies, such as Iowa's aging population and small towns that have lost their vibrancy. Even so, our newspaper, as well as others in Iowa, will continue to report on them.

Lyle Muller
Gazette Editor
319-398-8210

----- End of Forwarded Message

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 12:26:12 -0500

To: [REDACTED]

From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: Re: Whew!

Cc:

Bcc:

X-Attachments:

Now that's something I need to worry about!!!!

YIKES! s

However, you sure know how to piss people off. Did you see [REDACTED] comment on Facebook?

YIKES!

On Dec 14, 2011, at 7:13 AM, Stephen Bloom wrote:

[REDACTED]
things are not as gloomy as they appear. this is what Iowans need to fixate over these days? the economy is in a shambles, Gingrich appears headed for victory, I mean there is real NEWS out there! but this distraction, I guess, is good; it deflects from what's really important and what people really need to be worried about.

s

s, I was going to call you but I've been on the phone with people all night, who want to know "What the fuck?"

How are you holding up?

I've got to go to bed as I'm working outside tomorrow.

Later,

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: 'Stephen Bloom' <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: RE: Your article in the Atlantic and my decision to move to De Moines
Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 18:44:06 -0800
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]

Steve:

Thanks for the guidance.

If I get the offer, I foresee myself experiencing previously unobtainable levels of introspection.

Best regards,

[REDACTED]

From: Stephen Bloom [mailto:stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu]
Sent: Saturday, December 10, 2011 5:53 PM
To: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Your article in the Atlantic and my decision to move to De Moines

[REDACTED]

Thanks for your email....

Tough to say what you ought to do.....

You should be concerned about the move, as should your wife. But you're unemployed and not so young any longer. The best thing about Des Moines is the Saturday Farmer's Market, but it's closed for the season.

Read my first book, which details my move from SF to Iowa....*Postville: A Clash of Cultures in Heartland America*.

Email me when you get back.....

Good luck!

steve

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

Dear Mr. Bloom.

Tomorrow, I am flying to Des Moines for a job interview. Accordingly, I read your recent Atlantic article with great interest.

Although the job appears to be ideal for me, I have no idea of how well my family and I will fit into De Moines.

Although you are not a psychologist, I would appreciate your insights.

I am [REDACTED] years old (unemployed) and live in the [REDACTED] area. I am non-religious (although raised Jewish), an Ivy League-educated scientist (undergraduate and PhD), politically slightly-left-of-center, rarely eat red meat, and have a Chinese wife. My reasons for concern should be self-evident.

Although open space and better housing are appealing, I have no desire to being the center of attention.

Am on the verge of making a great mistake?

Sincerely

[REDACTED]

--

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 16:55:45 -0600

>Subject: re:IOWA

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>I regards to your abecedarian attempt at writing about my fellow lowans

>I would like to simply say, FUCK YOU! Simply put, simply stated and

>simply honest, as we would have it. Not behind your

>back, but to your face. FUCK YOU. I have guns, dogs, tractors, a

>recipe for casserole and all my teeth. i believe in gay rights,

>equality among all colors and religions. I have NO religion that I

>choose to follow, by my own choice. I was born here. I lived in 5

>other states in this nation and chose to come here to raise my kids.

> By my choice, out of my own observations of what I believe to be right

>and wrong. FUCK YOU. You can take you candy ass elsewhere.

> You don't belong here and you certainly don't deserve to be here.

> I may be a country hick, in your opinion, But I can certainly kick

>your ass! So, piss up a rope you ignorant fuck.

>

>FUCK YOU!

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 01:46:05 -0600

Subject: Fwd: Request for Clarification

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

CC: <gilbert-cranberg@uiowa.edu>

Dr. Bloom,

Since you have failed to respond to my communication, I have felt compelled to forward this discussion to one of your tenured associates. Hopefully they will be able to assist you in your journalistic endeavors.

[REDACTED]

College of Law class of 2009

----- Forwarded message -----

From: [REDACTED]

Date: Tue, Dec 13, 2011 at 1:18 PM

Subject: Request for Clarification

To: stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu

Dr. Bloom,

As a lifelong resident of the state of Iowa and a graduate of the University of Iowa College of Law, I found your piece in The Atlantic, "Observations From 20 Years of Iowa Life," to be a stereotypical, inaccurate and, at times, seemingly fictional portrayal of this great state and its people. For example, despite owning a chocolate Labrador Retriever for over 13 years, I never once was asked about my dog's hunting prowess. Although, to be fair, I did not spend those 13 years in the conservative hunting enclave of Iowa City and surrounding towns. However, I understand you may not be interested in my criticism of your piece. In reading the comments left by readers on the Atlantic website, I came across this request, which you have not yet responded to:

"Stephen,

I'm a reporter at the Cedar Rapids Gazette and your description of the front page on Easter piqued my curiosity. I'm a newcomer to this state as of last summer and originally a native of the New York suburbs, so I really don't know much about my company's history besides what I've been told.

So, I went down to the archives and checked the newspaper microfilm for 1991. It had a stand-alone centerpiece package with the headline "Preparing for Easter" and a photo of a local Church along with a caption describing worship services. After that, I checked 1990, which had a centerpiece photo of some lillies along with an attributed excerpt from the Bible. Going a year forward to 1992, I see again, a centerpiece package on Easter preparations along with a freelance lifestyle column on the left rail of an man's reflections on his wife's death. I did not see in the three year range the headline "HE HAS RISEN," but if you provide a more specific year, I would be happy to check and report back.

I didn't go sifting through microfilm because I'm concerned with historical accuracy (although that is important). I'm more worried that the newspaper you describe as part of an article communicating to the rest of the world a picture of the "real" Iowa, is one that is 20 years old. I'm not interested or capable in defending editorial decisions of the early

90s, as I was in first grade at the time on the other side of the country. But I do feel your dated characterization of The Gazette is an unfair one, especially if the context is the 2012 Iowa Caucuses.

I don't have much to say about your other observations. I have not been here long enough, and most of my reporting has been in the urban areas of Cedar Rapids and Iowa City. I will say that I have difficulty imagining the circumstances where Iowa City would appear completely empty, but, again, I cannot comment on the state of Iowa City in the early 90s.

Patrick Hogan"

I would be interested in your response to this entirely reasonable request for clarification of one of your (few) verifiable claims of Iowa's bumpkinness. As a professor of Journalism I'm certain that you are aware of the importance of accuracy, even in an opinion piece. I look forward to hearing back from you.

Regards,



College of Law, Class of 2009

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 15:24:45 -0600

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: Response to Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life

X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]

While reading your above article, I could really only think of two things:

1 - you're envious (I'll let you figure out of what)

2 - you had exactly one accurate statement in the entire piece, "I've lived in many places, lots of them foreign countries, but none has been more foreign to me than Iowa".

Obviously, it still is.

Get a grip. You just did more to damage the reputation of smug, college professors who think they know it all, than you did to Iowa. How pathetic is that?



Attachments:



Steve b&w.jpg

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 16:26:37 -0500

To: "Foley, Ryan J." <RJFoley@ap.org>

From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: response

Cc:

Bcc:

X-Attachments: :Macintosh HD:1933764:Steve b&w.jpg:

Ryan,

You can use all, any, or none. Call me for clarifications.....steve

"For 40 years as a journalist, I've tried to shine a light into dark corners. That's what good journalists do. They don't accept what politicians, government bureaucrats, corporate spokespeople say is the truth. Good journalism isn't just reporting. It's making observations, trying to make sense out of the world and its shadows- even if readers don't agree with those observations.

"This lengthy story asks readers to think about the long-term future of Iowa. It raises uncomfortable truths rarely discussed - but truths that absolutely need to be discussed no matter how difficult it may be to do so.

"When my book *Postville* came out in 2000, I was called some of the most hateful names imaginable. Many of my fellow Iowans took issue with me and what I reported. Eleven years later, the issues I raised in that book- about undocumented workers, pollution, unsafe working conditions, sexual abuse, financial irregularities - all have proven true.

"As happened with *Postville*, over the last several days, I've received hundreds of emails and phone calls, calling me all sorts of hateful things. Some of the responses, frankly, are frightening.

"Diversity of opinion is a cornerstone of democratic thought and principle. It's what we hold above almost everything else."

"The easiest response to my article is to condemn me and the issues I raise. That's a tried-and-true tactic. Kill the messenger, ignore the message. That's safe and convenient. But it doesn't get at some of the raw, undeniable questions this story poses.

"Perhaps my article gave some Iowans a moment to refocus their attention elsewhere - from some of the *real* issues confronting the state - Wal-Mart taking over the retail-trade sector, empty storefronts, water pollution among the worst in the nation, factories shutting down, the state's brain drain, undocumented workers taking minimum-wage jobs in the state's under-regulated slaughterhouses, not to mention the tragedy that anyone can see walking into the state's 17 casinos.

"I'm a proud journalist. I still believe in the adage, 'Comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable.' Today, much of the state is afflicted by a ravaged economy. Iowa's population growth has flat-lined. But I guess it's just more comforting to some Iowans to condemn me for pointing out these issues and others. Journalism isn't Happy News.

"Sorry if I offended, but that's the real job of journalism. Or it should be."

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 16:54:41 -0600
Subject: Response
Thread-Topic: Response
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
Accept-Language: en-US
acceptlanguage: en-US

Mr. Bloom,

I just finished reading your article posted in The Atlantic, concerning life in Iowa and the people that live here. Not that it matters to you, I am sure, but I find it offensive and lacking factual content. And I am left with only one question. Why on earth did you stay here and raise a family for 20 years??? I am sure your family has been completely traumatized by their experience here in Iowa!

Do you really feel you did all of the people in this state justice with your fictional writing? Did you do anything to help them? In your 20 years what have you done to try to make these communities a better place? Or was it just a way to draw a salary and meet your needs? I often wonder if our young aren't leaving the state because of over blown dreams planted in their head by others. The grass is always greener right?

I too left this great state at a young age. To join the military and serve my country, and further my education, as my family was unable to pay my way. I married; we had children, and moved back to my home town here in Iowa. There has never been a day that either of us has ever regretted that decision.

Now my grandchildren are being raised in the very same fashion.

I have met people from all over the world and believe some of the hardest working and friendly people of all come from right here in Iowa. So I am left wondering what little slice of heaven you called home prior to coming to Iowa.

In closing I would simply say, please leave. You serve no purpose in our little world. You are obviously not happy nor are we with you here so just forget it ever happened and move on. You know nothing of what it is to be from Iowa and you never will.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
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[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 11:42:29 -0600

>Subject: Rural Students

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <sally-mason@uiowa.edu>

>CC: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>President Mason,

>

>I am an alum of the U of I. I started in the Fall of [REDACTED], attended for
>a year and then dropped out. After some time away, I re-enrolled and
>graduated in [REDACTED]. With age and hindsight I realized there were two
>significant reasons I was unsuccessful in [REDACTED]. The first was my
>inattention to studies, an affliction common to many of my classmates.
>However the second and reason I am writing today was the lack of
>support and attitude of faculty and staff that was exemplified by the
>article written by Dr. Bloom in the Atlantic.

>

>I grew up in a small town in [REDACTED] Iowa, and admittedly had
>very little experience beyond the occasional trip to Des Moines to go
>shopping, attendance of a home football game in Iowa City, and a
>handful of vacations with my parents. While I did not grow up on a
>farm, and in fact both of my parents graduated with advanced degrees
>from the U of I, an apt description would have been that I fell off the
>turnip truck.

>

>However I knew there was a world beyond [REDACTED] County, Iowa, and I
>wanted to be a part of it. Much to my chagrin, most - not all, of the
>staff and professors I dealt with found students with broader life
>experiences typically from "Chicago" more interesting than kids from
>small towns in [REDACTED] Iowa. The derision from some professors was
>palpable when a student walked in with a quilted flannel shirt and a
>baseball cap representing a consolidated small high school with a funny
>acronym (GBF). I hoped this had changed, but sadly if Professor Bloom
>is at all representative of the faculty then it has not.

>

>I believe in academic freedom and do not think Professor Bloom should
>be disciplined, terminated, or suffer adverse consequences for his
>writings. As the President of the University though it is your job to
>ensure students, all students including ones from small meth added
>towns in [REDACTED] Iowa, have an opportunity to succeed. I hope the
>University is taking steps to ensure that every student enrolled is
>welcomed and encouraged.

>

>If there is anyway that I can assist in this process please let me
>know. I would be happy to participate.

>

>Thanks,

>

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:23:47 -0500
>To: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>
>From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Fwd: Scuzzy
>Cc:
>Bcc:
>X-Attachments:
>
>>X-Yahoo-Newman-Property: ymail-3
>>X-Yahoo-Newman-Id: [REDACTED]
>>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 12:15:15 -0800
>>From: [REDACTED]
>>Reply-To: [REDACTED]
>>Subject: Scuzzy
>>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>>
>>Hey you scuzzy piece of shit wanna-be "journalist." You are a disgrace
>>to the true profession. Go back to Oz or wherever it is you came from.
>>You're not welcome here and I'm tired of paying your salary.

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 15:33:46 -0500

To: jcharisc@iowacity.gannett.com

From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: statement

Cc:

Bcc:

X-Attachments:

Jeff,

I'm swamped with requests, as well as incendiary emails.....

But here are two statements. You can use all, any, or none. Good luck with the piece!

stephen

"For 40 years as a journalist, I've tried to shine a light into dark corners. That's what good journalists do. They don't accept what politicians, government bureaucrats, corporate spokespeople say is the truth. Good journalism isn't just reporting. It's making observations, trying to make sense out of the world and its shadows- even if readers don't agree with those observations.

"This lengthy story asks readers to think about the long-term future of Iowa. It raises uncomfortable truths rarely discussed - but truths that absolutely need to be discussed no matter how difficult it may be to do so.

"When my book *Postville* came out in 2000, I was called some of the most hateful names imaginable. Many of my fellow Iowans took issue with me and what I reported. Eleven years later, the issues I raised in that book- about undocumented workers, pollution, unsafe working conditions, sexual abuse, financial irregularities - all have proven true.

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"Perhaps my article gave some Iowans a moment to refocus their attention elsewhere - from some of the *real* issues confronting the state - Wal-Mart taking over the retail-trade sector, empty storefronts, water pollution among the worst in the nation, factories shutting down, the state's brain drain, undocumented workers taking minimum-wage jobs in the state's under-regulated slaughterhouses, not to mention the tragedy that anyone can see walking into the

state's 17 casinos.

"I'm a proud journalist. I still believe in the adage, 'Comfort the afflicted, and afflict the comfortable.' Today, much of the state is afflicted by a ravaged economy. Iowa's population growth has flat-lined. But I guess it's just more comforting to some Iowans to condemn me for pointing out these issues and others. Sorry if I offended, but that's the real job of journalism. Or it should be."

Subject: Statement

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 08:05:16 -0600

Thread-Topic: Statement

Thread-Index: Acy6aWgOyk/P50ttSXXfoSMZuex/9w==

From: Andrew Altenbern <aaltenbern@kwwl.com>

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Professor Bloom,

I, like many other Iowans, have read your article you recently published online through *The Atlantic*.

I recently got a job working here at KWWL Channel seven in Waterloo.

I'm wondering if you would be interested in sending us a statement regarding the article you've written, and the response you've received after having it published online.

If you're free, we're interested in setting up a phone interview with you at noon.

You can email the newsroom at: kwwlnews@kwwl.com

And the newsroom phone number is: 319-291-1240- (Ask for Eric Page)

We hope to hear from you,

Andrew Altenbern

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: "[REDACTED]"
To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Stephen--I apologize for Iowans--at least read the bold lines in my email
Thread-Topic: Stephen--I apologize for Iowans--at least read the bold lines in my email
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:56:25 -0600
Accept-Language: en-US

Hello Stephen,

First I want to apologize for Iowans who may have threatened you. I am a dental student here at the University and grew up in a small Iowa town my whole life [REDACTED] before coming here. I agree that we have our problems as Iowans but one thing we are is fiercely loyal. Your article is true (for the most part) about rural Iowans but anyone from here, esp us city folk, are going to be upset by that stereotype.

Traveling internationally is one of my favorite things to do in life so I have seen a fair chunk of the world and been to nearly every state. Iowa is a bit hickish in parts and we def have our tractors. Whether good or bad Ill agree your description is fair for, in my estimates, 30% of Iowans. However Iowans are the friendliest people Ive seen as they will say hi and bye and smile at everyone, even in Iowa City. We are safe, trusting and generally well educated. I know the backlash you have received based on your article. **Perhaps you could write another article about all the good parts of Iowa you have seen? I'm sure you've seen some of the good Iowa has if nothing else pride in our state haha. It would be a great PR move.**

Just tossing that out as an idea. Now back to studying for my oral maxillofacial surgery class so I can take care of Iowas meth mouth patients :).

Best of luck to you,

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

From: Charity Nebbe <cnebbe@iowapublicradio.org>
To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 12:56:47 -0500
Subject: "Talk of Iowa"
Thread-Topic: "Talk of Iowa"
Thread-Index: Acy6ib9cF81Ubsc8RBGUvz2hjW5IjA==
Accept-Language: en-US
acceptlanguage: en-US

Hello Professor Bloom,

This is the last time we will bother you, but as host of "Talk of Iowa" I wanted to reach out to you and ask you, once again, to be on our program. Tomorrow we will dedicate the entire hour to the statewide discussion launched by your article. I would really love for you to be a part of the conversation. I believe that public radio is one of the places in the media landscape today where people with opposing viewpoints can come together and have a civil discussion. Where we respect our guests and listeners enough to allow people to make their case, share their ideas and advance the conversation. In my 17 years on the air I have never asked a guest a disrespectful question, and I have interviewed many people with whom I do not agree. You raise some very important issues in your article that don't fit into the bucolic story many of us like to tell about our state. Your article was provocative and I can see why many people took offence, but I'm hoping that the result of this will be an open and honest discussion of what our state is and isn't in 2011.

Here is what I propose. I will interview you for the first 12 minutes of the program. It can be live or pre-taped. I am available today between 12:30 and 3pm to do a taped interview. After our conversation I will be joined by Kyle Munson of the Des Moines Register and Jennifer Wilson, author of "Running Away to Home" and we will open the phones. The focus of the conversation following your interview will be, "What story do you think needs to be told about Iowa in 2011?"

Thank you for your consideration.

Charity Nebbe

Charity Nebbe | Host | Iowa Public Radio
710 S. Clinton St. | Iowa City, IA 52240
319-335-5267 | <http://www.iowapublicradio.org/>

[REDACTED]

>X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]
>From: [REDACTED]
>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: Thank you
>Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 00:42:30 +0000

>
>Professor Bloom,
>I would like to thank you for your article in The Atlantic. I ask that
>you follow this up by submitting it to the LA Times and the San
>Francisco Chronicle. Hopefully articles such as this, that present
>Iowa as economically-depressed, culturally-challenged, and meth
>infested, will finally help us solve our biggest problem. That problem
>being, keeping smug, snotty, elitists (with no reason to be)
>individuals such as yourself from putting down stakes in our beautiful
>state. Maybe it's time for you to go back to your California Utopia of
>culture and opportunity, we'll do our best to make due without you.
>Sincerely,
>[REDACTED]
>

--
Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan
Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

X-EN-OrigOutIP: [REDACTED]
X-EN-IMPSID: [REDACTED]
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 22:17:42 -0600
Subject: Thanks so much for your uninformed ignorance information about the
state I happen to love.
From: [REDACTED]
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Thread-Topic: Thanks so much for your uninformed ignorance information about
the state I happen to love.
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
X-EN-UserInfo: [REDACTED]
X-EN-AuthUser: [REDACTED]
Sender: [REDACTED]
X-EN-OrigIP: [REDACTED]
X-EN-OrigHost: [REDACTED]

As a person who pays your salary, you might want to rethink your uninformed ideas about this state.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED] (one of the stupid towns in Iowa), Iowa

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Sender: [REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 13:36:45 -0600

X-Google-Sender-Auth: [REDACTED]

Subject: "The Atlantic" Article

From: '[REDACTED]'

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Hi Professor Bloom, what an exciting portrayal of our state in The Atlantic! Hope you'll vote with your feet and move somewhere more pretentious.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>X-Yahoo-Newman-Id: [REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>X-Yahoo-Newman-Property: ymail-3

>X-YMail-OSG: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>X-Yahoo-SMTP: [REDACTED]

>Subject: The Atlantic

>From: [REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 20:55:11 -0600

>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>

>Mr. Bloom,

>

> Just a quick note about your article for The Atlantic- besides
>being closed minded and insulting to the people of the state you call
>"home" you came off as a total jerk. Which begs the question why are
>you here? I love Iowa. I love America. I love Jesus. And I love my
>rights in this country. The freedom of religion and the right to own
>and bare arms. I will not try to shove my beliefs down your throat. I
>believe everyone is born with a free will and should have a choice in
>how they choose to live their life and what they believe in. But I am
>curious as to why you think you have the right to tell others how to
>live theirs or how they should wish someone a Merry Christmas or happy
>holiday. I respect the right you have to voice your opinions. But I DO
>NOT respect the way you went about it.
>In the future show a little class. And if you don't like it here PLEASE
>by all means leave. This is obviously too simple a place for your
>brilliant mind. In closing I have been an avid supporter of the
>University for years and I have never been more disgusted or felt more
>shame to be associated with it then I was after I read your article.
>Thank you for your time and I hope someday maybe you can realize,
>though this place we live has many problems like so many other places,
>it has treasures too.

>

> Just another friendly Iowan,

>

> [REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

[REDACTED]

Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 20:23:43 -0500
To: jeffrey-denburg@uiowa.edu
From: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Fwd: The Colbert Report
Cc:
Bcc:
X-Attachments:

j,
see below.....s

From: Emily Lazar <emily.lazar@thecolbertreport.org>
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: The Colbert Report
Date: Sun, 11 Dec 2011 18:34:17 -0500
Thread-Index: Acy4XJxEqLsNvdfJQX+QYjaaxQAJHw==

Hi Professor Bloom-

I'm a producer working with Comedy Central's Stephen Colbert. I'm writing to see if I could discuss with you being a guest on The Colbert Report on Tuesday, January 3, the day of the Iowa Caucuses.

This would be a 6 minute one on one conversation shot live to tape in front of an audience in New York City.

We'd like you to talk with Stephen about Iowa and the character of the people who get to launch our electoral process. (We realize you're in Michigan this year.)

We would obviously pay for your travel to New York City and for you hotel accommodations while you're here.

Would this interest you? Can we discuss this further? I'm at 212-649-6226 or email me the best way to get in contact with you by phone.

I hope to hear from you.

All the best,

Emily J. Lazar
Supervising Producer
The Colbert Report
212-649-6226

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

>From: "[REDACTED]"
>To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: This UI student applauds you! Please read
>Thread-Topic: This UI student applauds you! Please read
>Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 23:38:10 -0600
>Accept-Language: en-US

>
>Dear Professor Bloom,

>
>My name is [REDACTED] and I am a [REDACTED] at the University of Iowa.
>I am currently majoring in [REDACTED]
>[REDACTED] California born and bred, I spent my high
>school years in the [REDACTED] suburbs. Maybe it has something to do
>with my California roots, my vegan diet, or my out-of-state student
>status but I found your article absolutely hilarious and spot-on. You
>did a fantastic job capturing the sad reality of the Heartland. I, like
>you, frequently ask myself what I am doing here.

>
>The outraged reactions on behalf of lowans seem to perfectly reflect
>their extreme ignorance. They are too stubborn to face the gigantic
>problems facing the state of Iowa today and living in a different time
>(before the invention of microwave ovens). Furthermore, it is apparent
>that the majority of these individuals have not read the article in its
>entirety...or perhaps at all. It took one moron posting the article on
>Facebook (along with a quote or two) to create mass hysteria on behalf
>of incompetent, social media crazed, in-state students. And their
>parents who have somehow found their way onto the Internet.

>
>Also, I believe you may be trending on Twitter by now.
>#justCauseUhateHuntin

>
>I want to applaud you for your bravery in writing this article. I would
>be truly honored to meet you before my time at UI is out. Next
>semester, however, I will be dancing in Paris. Say, some of them lowans
>have warned me about them rude Parisians. They smell, y'know.

>
>Culturally. Challenged.

>
>Best wishes and please be safe (these people own guns),

>

--
Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 23:34:33 -0600
>From: [REDACTED]
>Reply-To: [REDACTED]
>To: <sgbloom@umich.edu>, <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: truths

>
>Truth, unfortunately, is in the eye of the beholder at times. What you
>call provocative and insightful might actually be crass and
>stereotypical. You, as the author, get to judge the intent of your
>words but not the effect of them. You told Jim Romenesko that what
>angered you the most was the characterization that you are an elitist
>and that people are suggesting that you don't know what you are talking
>about. Sir, you've just defined yourself as an elitist with those
>words.

>
>You've apparently endowed upon yourself the title of expert in defining
>Iowa by the simple facts that you lived here 20 years and traveled the
>State. That makes you an expert in nothing except the opinions you've
>personally formed from your own experiences. By that logic, my 40
>years of life in this state qualifies me as twice the expert as you.
>Except I lack the elitist gene that would make me believe that fallacy.

>
>The elitist label comes from your demonstrated belief that something
>else about you or your background qualifies you to elevate those
>personal experiences and opinions to the level of facts. Perhaps you
>gain this belief from your UC Berkley education, your commercial
>success in practicing your art, or your successes within the protected
>walls of your tenured career choice. You crossed a line when you
>presented your opinions as facts in the Atlantic piece. You crossed a
>line when you continued to insist to Jim Romenesko that your opinions
>were in fact "uncomfortable truths" apparently explained by a simple
>premise that the reader isn't inept enough to "get it." To use your
>words: "how convenient."

>
>Your opinion is something that no one has a right to take away from
>you. Fortunately, facts belong to all of us. When you elevate your
>personal opinions and biases to the level of facts or truths without
>the self awareness to understand that is what you are doing you've
>earned the label of an elitist. It is well deserved. If you do
>possess that self awareness then you are simply narcissistic.
>There is a fine line between being provocative and being a simple
>jerk (that is a simpleton Iowa term). This piece crossed that line.

>
>The only solace in reading this, as a life long Iowan that has been to
>38 states and would raise a family no where else, is the fact that
>you've now exposed yourself to the world with this piece and you will
>be judged for it by coworkers, students, alumni and employers. That is
>enough for me.

>
>There are many other places in the world for you, who obviously has
>used Iowa for convenience rather than assimilation. I hope you find
>one of those places and thrive there.

>
[REDACTED]
>Des Moines, IA

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa



>Date: Fri, 9 Dec 2011 15:56:47 -0500

>To: Garance Franke-Ruta <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>

>From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>Subject: tweak

>Cc:

>Bcc:

>X-Attachments:

>

>G,

>here's the change:

>Graf that begins - "Considering the above, not just a few Iowa heads

>turned"

>Let's change the last sentence to:

>So far, Democrats have blocked a statewide referendum on the issue

>(Dems hold sway in the Iowa Senate 26-24), but if Republicans take

>control of the Senate, gay marriage could - and likely would- be

>repealed.

>

>

>o.k.

>

>

>steve

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Uncomfortable truths?
Thread-Topic: Uncomfortable truths?
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 19:54:37 -0600
Accept-Language: en-US

Tell me, professor: how can what you're saying be declared as truth when there are (or were, depending on whether or not you've corrected them by now) *numerous* factual errors throughout your story? If I were to run a story with as many errors as yours had, I'd get drop-kicked out the back door of the DI.

People are calling you elitist, and arrogant, and pretentious because that's *exactly* how you come off to people, both in this story and in person. Combine that with the fact that you apparently like to study us like animals in a zoo, and now that you refuse to back down (claiming "truth" when you printed far too much false information), it's no small wonder a lot of people seem to take a dislike to you. Nobody forced you to come here, and if you didn't like it, you were always free to leave.

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 15:52:44 -0500

Subject: Updating your story

From: Franke-Ruta Garance <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>

To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Thread-Topic: Updating your story

Thread-Index: Acy6olPIjbmj50UJEaUkibb3E5mMg==

Hi Stephen,

I'm about to go through and aggressively moderate the comments, but before I do I need to correct this passage in light of the revelations at the link below:

"When my family and I first moved to Iowa, our first Easter morning I read the second-largest newspaper in the state (the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*) with this headline splashed across Page One: HE HAS RISEN. The headline broke all the rules I was trying to teach my young journalism students: the event was neither breaking nor could it be corroborated by two independent sources. The editors obviously thought that everyone knew who He was, and cared."

<http://thegazette.com/2011/12/14/heres-the-gazettes-easter-sunday-front-page-in-1994/>

[Here's my proposed revision:](#)

["When my family and I first moved to Iowa, our first Easter morning I read the second-largest newspaper in the state \(the *Cedar Rapids Gazette*\) and saw a passage from Matthew 28:5-6 splashed across Page One. The religious passage broke all the rules I was trying to teach my young journalism students: the event was neither breaking nor could it be corroborated by two independent sources."](#)

[As well, our social media editor has collected a series of responses to your piece, and we plan to run them with a short editorial note. And then some other folks, such as the former editor of the Iowa Independent, have also filed responses, which we'd like to run as part of having a dialog on the piece, which to date has drawn more than 172,000 page views. I can't really show you the aggregation piece before we run it because it is in Storify, but I can give you an advance look at the rest.](#)

[Thanks,](#)
[Garance](#)

>me and given me a nurturing environment in which to grow and develop.
>In your article, you demonstrate a dismissive attitude that shows that
>you, much more than the rural lowans you dismiss, are living under the
>influence of a closed mind. Shame on you for your rejection of a
>culture you have made little effort to understand.
> [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 23:36:19 -0500

>Subject: Well done, Prof. Bloom!

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Hi Professor Bloom,

>As a grad from Iowa's J-school, and I just wanted to tell you how I

>touched I was by your article in the Atlantic.

>

>As a born and bred Iowan, I thought the article (which at times left me
>nostalgic and teary-eyed) was lovely. I moved to DC immediately after I
>graduated in 2008, and though I very rarely feel homesick, your article
>makes me realize how much I miss Iowa (!).

>

>Anyway, I don't understand why people are so angry. I don't see an
>ounce of maliciousness in this article. And for what it's worth, having
>been removed from the culture and people for a while, I think you wrote
>as accurate a portrayal of Iowa as I've seen. So bravo!

>

>I wish you all the best!

>

>[REDACTED]

>

>P.S. It's been six years since I read it for your class, but I still
>recommend Art of Fact as often as possible!! I hope you still teach
>with it!

>

>[REDACTED]

>J.D. Candidate, 2013

>[REDACTED]

>[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 21:18:25 -0500
Subject: What say you?
From: Franke-Ruta Garance <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Thread-Topic: What say you?
Thread-Index: Acy6zS9Bcvvza2BoRfKHMokZvxp0SwAAqPdw

----- Forwarded Message

From: Lyle Muller <lyle.muller@thegazette.com>
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:59:33 -0800
To: "Franke-Ruta, Garance" <gfrankeruta@theatlantic.com>
Subject: Stephen Bloom article -- "He is Risen"

Dear Ms. Franke-Ruta:

Thank you for correcting the record about what The Gazette printed on an Easter Sunday front page that Stephen Bloom referred to in his Atlantic essay about Iowa. No headline stating "He is Risen" was spread across any Easter Sunday front page of The Gazette between 1986 and 2006, according our archives. The headline would not have appeared in one edition of the newspaper but not the ones in our archives.

The Gazette reference in the article is a small one given the scope of the ultimate message being conveyed in the Bloom piece. Plenty in the article exists about which to dispute but truths also exists about which the people of this state - of which I am a native - need to consider.

Sadly, the article's sarcastic tone and need to address an error detract for the moment from larger issues that Bloom identifies, such as Iowa's aging population and small towns that have lost their vibrancy. Even so, our newspaper, as well as others in Iowa, will continue to report on them.

Lyle Muller
Gazette Editor
319-398-8210

----- End of Forwarded Message

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 21:23:16 -0600

>Subject: Why do you stay?

>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>I don't get it... I was born and raised in the state, educated at Iowa.

>I then moved away and lived elsewhere, and continue to. I understand

>the state's flaws.

>

>Here's my question: If you think so poorly of Iowa, why do you stay?

>While I respect your freedom of opinion (and respectfully disagree with

>most points and the overall characterization), I don't get it.

>Why not leave over the past 20 years?

>

>Respectfully,

>

>

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 22:54:12 -0600

>Subject: wow

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Hey Steve,

>

>Quite a reaction you're getting on that story! I'm not sure, but I

>think you may have touched a nerve. My favorite part of the reaction?

>In the hundreds of online comments, not one person has disputed that

>Steve King is the "wackiest congressman in America."

>

>How's Ann Arbor? I'm closing in on a year now in Lincoln. Like it

>pretty well, although I hope to get out and do some more work in

>western cowboy country. Two hours west of here, the corn vanishes and

>the farmers turn into beer-swillin' ranchers. Should make for some good

>stories.

>

>Anyway, hope all's well. Go Hawks!

>

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 11:49:44 +0530

Subject: Yet another repulsed Iowan

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Good morning, Prof. Bloom;

While you may work in the college I graduated from at the university I graduated from, I am sorry to say your recent "work" highlighted in the Atlantic magazine does nothing but further stereotype and marginalize my fellow Iowans and me. While we don't all have the opportunity you had, to move here and spend 20 years of life "observing" our down-home, backwards culture, I am almost loathe to be an Atlantic subscriber after reading your libelous piece. As one has resided in Iowa City for the vast majority of your time in the state, you should know full well that these characterizations are nothing but complete fabrications. (Excuse my words that may exceed four syllables.) As with any territory in these 50 states, you will find a large variation within the population of each - and for you to exploit and cherry-pick examples from Iowa is to only further knock us down the totem pole, Iowa's place at the forefront of political relevance is only further endangered by "reports" like yours. So please - I beg you, for the sake of realistic and accurate journalism - travel outside North Liberty and see what else Iowa has to offer before you malign it so. Thank you;

--

Sincerely,

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: "[REDACTED]"
>To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: You & Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life
>Thread-Topic: You & Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life
>Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 11:33:25 -0600
>Accept-Language: en-US
>

>Dear Professor Bloom,
>I would like to start out saying that I am not an journalism major,
>therefore, my grammar, English, sentence structure, etc. will probably
>not be "up to par" for the short email I am about to send.
>However, when you are no longer on leave from the University of Iowa
>(which will hopefully mean the spring semester) I would love to have a
>discussion with you about your article, " Observations from 20 Years of
>Iowa Life." I presume, from reading a single page of your article, that
>you have very strong opinions about Iowa. Disregarding any of the
>political opinions of the article, I have very strong OPPOSING opinions
>about Iowa. For reasons unknown, I feel very strongly that I need to
>have a discussion with you. I related to many of the Iowa facts that
>your portrayed so negatively. I am aware that I will not change your
>opinions; I still would love to chat.
>Let me know when you are free after break if you're interested.

>
>Merry Christmas,
[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 14:13:13 -0500
To: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>
From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: you can't let the turkeys keep you down
Cc:
Bcc:
X-Attachments:

Garance,

Colbert pulled out, but I'm appearing on CNN's John King Show tomorrow, 6 - 7 p.m.

I wanted to continue our discussion of the pointless rants in the comments' section. Please delete the malicious, no-purpose comments that only invite more.

On a more positive note, I've pasted below a sampling of positive comments I've received (please disregard the email addresses).....

stephen

From: [REDACTED]
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject:
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:37:31 -0600

Professor Bloom,

I read your article "Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life." Reading a fellow outsider's view of our state was very refreshing. Thanks.

Happy Holidays!

[REDACTED]

Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 07:24:10 -0600
Subject: Re: My take on Iowa
From: [REDACTED]
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

That is a great read Steve -- insightful and thought-provoking with great humor mixed in all of the right places.

[REDACTED]

P.S. My wife and I get the same kind of comments about our beagle, [REDACTED] when we walk him around the neighborhood. One guy even asked my wife if our dog was fixed because he'd "like to breed him."

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 18:33:01 -0600

>Subject: You probably won't read this, but its worth a try...

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Mr Bloom:

>

>My name is [REDACTED] I am [REDACTED] years old and I am from Keokuk,
>Iowa. I'm sure that you've had quite a few complaints from Iowans in
>the past few days. I am not here to threaten you or any other silly
>thing. Unfortunately, I am not currently in Iowa, I am at [REDACTED]
>[REDACTED] in the Army soon to deploy with the [REDACTED] to Afghanistan.

>That is neither here nor there, I would like to share a few experiences
>with you. I was born in Keokuk the same year that you started teaching
>at the University of Iowa. I grew up farming the land that my family
>owns, a little over 1,500 acres. I grew up in the lush emerald fields
>of corn and soy beans. I hunt, I fish, I go to church every Sunday, and
>my graduating class was less than 100. I wouldn't trade that for
>anything in the whole world. I have been begging my commander to let me
>go home to Iowa before we deploy for months now. It's in that rich
>black dirt, and rolling fields that I like Scarlett O' Hara get my
>strength. Although it's now winter and there is no corn, it's still my
>home that I get my strength. In 2008 as I'm sure you recall, the
>Mississippi flooded.

>Being in Keokuk, we had to worry about the Mississippi and the Des
>Moines river. This is where you saw everyone, and I mean everyone in
>town helping neighbors sandbag, move in if need be, offer places to
>stay when the bridge was closed. Yes, Iowa is still a very rural state,
>this America used to be. Is that such a bad thing? Who wants to have to
>lock up their house and car every night? I was appalled when I moved to
>North Carolina and I had to lock my door at night.

>Your dog, Hannah I believe her name was, is part of your family,
>correct? Sir, we have three bird dogs, and all of them are as much of
>my family as my four brothers. You cannot judge all of Iowa on the
>towns that you've visited. Calling my river town " depressed,
>crime-infested slum town." Growing up I never saw it as that, and had
>never heard it called such terrible things. My people being called
>"meth-heads with missing teeth", this is where you sound like one of
>those sly Cali guys that extremely uneducated, whether you've been here
>or not for 20 years. You can't lump all people in that area into that
>category. I hope when you return to my native state, you look with more
>humble eyes.

>

>Thank you for your time.

>God Bless.

>

>Sincerely,

>[REDACTED]

>Keokuk, Iowa

>

>"Iowa is home to teachers, farmers, lawyers, factory workers, and many
>others who work hard every day to provide the best for their families
>and their future."- Leonard Boswell

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:24:33 -0500
To: Garance Franke-Ruta <garanceruta@gmail.com>
From: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Fwd: You should be ashamed
Cc:
Bcc:
X-Attachments:

From: [REDACTED]
To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: You should be ashamed
Thread-Topic: You should be ashamed
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 15:25:33 -0600
Accept-Language: en-US

Dr. Bloom-

I am a lifelong Iowan and current medical student at the University of Iowa. I am from one of those worthless little small towns you condescendingly deride in your latest article in The Atlantic. The picture you paint is an exaggerated caricature of a small minority of this state. You are the epitomize the current state of the "left-wing", aloof bafoons who are just as close-minded and offensive as the radical right.

I respect your right to publish whatever you please but please, in the future, don't spread malicious lies about out state.

[REDACTED]
University of Iowa
Carver College of Medicine
[REDACTED]

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[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 17:46:30 +0430

Subject: You will never be an Iowan.

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Professor Bloom ~

I'm not surprised by the backlash. You stated that your article "raises uncomfortable truths rarely discussed." That's fine, I don't care if you want to deride detassling, even though it's a high-paying job for a high schooler. The reason why people are upset is because you out-and-out lied about Iowa. You distorted truth and came off as completely biased with some kind of superiority complex. You teach journalism, so I guess it goes with the territory.

(See? It's easy to do.) That isn't hog feces you smell, it's you taking a shit all over an entire state. It's not surprising Iowa feels "foreign" even after twenty years...you view yourself as separate and "above" the Iowa "commoners". Just a few of your "inaccuracies":

*Iowa river towns some of the scuzziest I've ever been to. Well, then you haven't been around much. You ESPECIALLY haven't been around much in Jersey. Crime in Iowa is one of the lowest in the nation...I'd consider crime a much better indicator of "scuzziness". Or go to LA, New Orleans or any major metropolis and look at all the trash and filth in the streets, for God's sake.

*To the east of Des Moines, Iowa is solidly Democratic; to the west, it's rabidly Republican. Completely baseless and overly simplistic. Political voting map with a google search can disprove this one, easy. Just lazy opinion writing.

*Gay marriage. I'm going to go out on a limb and guess you're a progressive sort. How does Iowa becoming the second state to legalize gay marriage prove we are "culturally-challenged"? Saying it will be repealed is pure speculation; saying we allowed it, is fact.

*Farmer's tan. The fact you don't know what one is proves you've never had to do any sort of outdoor, physical labor in your life, but I'm sure you've been called out on this one already. Hey, if you can avoid working with your hands, good on you, but it sure doesn't make you better than those can't. Quite the opposite, probably.

*Iowan drivers, no survivors. Uhm. Okay. To say that just because a town doesn't have a stop light means they don't use turn signals is insane. I grew up on a farm. The closest town was 7 miles away and had 400 people. If you just up and decided not to use a turn signal, you got a ticket from a small-town cop or the sheriff. Just like anywhere else.

*Depressed, collapsed society. Iowa ranked second only to Nebraska in 2009 in states least-affected by the economic crisis. Unemployment is about 2/3 that of the national average, at or below 6%, while population grew 4.1% from 2000 to 2010...definitely not the numbers supporting people "abandoning"

the state. Again, distortions, I assume, with the intent of enraging some jackass in New York city who says to himself how unfair it is that these backwards barbarians who can't even manage their own societies get to decide who becomes president.

*Hunting. I've hunted deer for years during shotgun season, I'm going to assume you haven't. Partly because you say killed with a rifle is good, bow is better, even though rifle hunting is outlawed in Iowa (rifle rounds travel too far over the flat land, hence the shotgun). I've never hunted with any group that gets liquored up before they go out or drinks during. NEVER. I'm not saying it doesn't happen, but it sure as hell isn't as commonplace as you make it seem.

*Mud rooms. I touched upon the pig shit thing. I grew up in rural Iowa. I only knew of one house with a mud room. No one likes the smell of pig shit, and very few call it the "smell of money", and if they do, it is with disdain and contempt.

* Appellation. Your categorization of what common last names are is laughable. I've never heard any of those.

There are many more specific statements you made which were incorrect or distorted or just untrue, but it makes no difference. You had a specific intent when writing this article. If you cannot see the good in Iowa, or the great, why in the hell would you stay there? I have spent 48 hours or more in over 75% of the states in the country, as well as traveling to more than 10 countries around the world, and there is no place which even comes close to matching the benefits Iowa offers. Low crime, great education, good people, cheap cost of living...People are incensed because you come from what we consider to be a laughingstock of the United States (good job on Corzine), and yet you have the audacity to judge us without the capacity to do so evenhandedly. You say you "fear" for the safety of your family. Get real. If you really want to shine the light in the dark corners and put yourself "out there", try writing an article which bashes Jersey even half that much and see the response of the total degenerates you put on television.

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 01:26:11 -0600

>Subject: Your Article - A Completely Threat Free Response

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>Mr. Bloom-

>First, I find it truly saddening that you have lived in this state for
>20 years and you have never seen lowans and Iowa without prejudice. I
>hope you read my e-mail. My name is [REDACTED]. I was born in Vietnam and
>I was adopted by an Iowan family. I'm a practicing Hindu, a
>vegetarian, I've never shot a gun, I'm a liberal, and I've never had
>anyone ask me if I take my Labrador hunting.

>It disgusts me that you wrote this drivel, but it makes me physically
>ill that someone published this. Even worse? Because of you and your
>perpetuating stereotypes that are largely trash, you are reinforcing
>incorrect beliefs to people who cannot even find Iowa on a map.

>I'm going to keep this short and sweet. You shouldn't be afraid for
>your family's safety. We're better than that here. I will say this:

>I do not understand why you are so confused. Why are all of these
>lowans well and truly pissed? Because we have been paying your salary
>for 20 years, entrusting you to teach our best and brightest to be the
>best change they can be for the world. Then, after you run away to
>Michigan, you trash talk and use words to eviscerate the very people
>who supported your family. You have broken our trust and that is
>everything to us backwoods, slow-talking, suicidal, scuzz-loving,
>meth-heads.

>You are not a very nice human being. I read your comment to Kyle
>Munson. I do NOT believe that you were perpetuating any form of truth
>in your article. There were lazy attempts to temper the nastiness, but
>the whole tone of your piece is contemptuous and hateful. Yes, Iowa is
>in economic turmoil, but no more than the rest of the country.

>I'm truly sorry that you haven't allowed yourself to experience the
>wonderful things Iowa has to offer. I wonder how you managed to visit
>all 99 counties and not once be touched by the rugged, natural beauty
>of Ringgold County; the beautiful Loess Hills of Western Iowa and the
>Broken Kettle Grasslands of Plymouth County; the pride in ancestral
>heritage exhibited in Marion County (Tulip Time in Pella), Sioux County
>(Tulip Festival in Orange City), Iowa County (Amana Colony); the urban
>renewal of downtown Des Moines and Iowa City (Polk and Linn Counties),
>and many more that I don't care to waste my time writing about to
>someone who should have seen and appreciated, but didn't.

>An even greater tragedy is that you missed out on Iowa's greatest
>treasure: it's people. They are kind, generous, hard-working, simple,

>informed, intelligent, and amazing people. They know that people assume
>they are stupid and naive, but they don't care. I can guarantee that
>if you were in need, someone would come to your aid.
> Even now, after you have completely destroyed their image with other
>states by exploiting a caricature for your gain.
>
>I'm not going to tell you to go back to California. I'm not going to
>threaten you (and from what I've read, no one else has either).
> I invite you to come back to Iowa and try again, but only if you leave
>your prejudices, antipathy, and pessimism behind in Ann Arbor.
> Come back to Iowa and see it for what it really is. I'm not going to
>lie to you. There are so many of us that are very, very angry.
> We will not welcome you back with open arms. We won't welcome you
>back with loaded shotguns, pitchforks, and torches either. If you
>come back to Iowa and decide to try again, you will be on the receiving
>end of the worst form of punishment- our glacial cold shoulder. You
>will be glared at, talked about, and looked down upon.
>
>If you don't want to challenge your own narrow-minded vision.
> Please, don't teach our students. We don't need your disease spread
>to them while they are still malleable. Iowa works hard to raise
>independent thinkers who are capable of deciding for themselves if
>homosexual marriage is okay, if they want to stay in Iowa, or if they
>want to pay the salary of some pompous ass professor who defames and
>libels the very people who pay the taxes and tuitions that support him.
>If you don't want to man up and take the challenge.... then go to
>whatever place you think you won't find anyone like us stupid Iowans
>you see everywhere. You'll never be happy ANYWHERE because of the
>delusions you carry within yourself.
>
>At the very least, you need to publicly retract or correct your article
>for its gross factual misrepresentations. What you SHOULD do, however,
>is recant the entire article, resign your position at the University of
>Iowa, and issue a public apology for your work of fiction that was
>represented as journalism.
>
> [REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: Your article in The Atlantic

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 11:55:04 -0600

Stephen: Just picked up the Register and read with surprise and interest Kyle Munson's reaction to your article in The Atlantic; I then was compelled to read the complete piece in the magazine. Your observations are right on should be applauded by any honest observer. I also admire your guts to "tell it like it is." Happy Holidays to you and yours. ~ [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 15:28:44 -0600

>Subject: Your article

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>I Just wanted to drop you a quick note and let you know that your
>article was hands down one of the most offensive things I have ever
>read. Id love to make a comment or two about "liberal professors" or
>that ..those who can't, teach. But that would be stereotyping others
>and that's wrong. Well that's how I was raised anyway.

>

>[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]
>X-Originating-Email: [REDACTED]
>From: "[REDACTED]" <[REDACTED]>
>To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 22:03:31 +0000
>Subject: Your article

>
>I read your article and I must say that I was shocked that a professor
>would stereotype Iowa or midwesterners as immigrant hating, narrow
>minded and angry people. I have never lived in Iowa and in fact I have
>homes in Denver and Scottsdale but I did receive my undergrad at a
>midwestern University. Your representation of folks in our countries
>heartland is a fabrication and simply untrue unless you were speaking
>of yourself. I can tell you that people like me are sick of the illegal
>alien invasion because it is costing us Billions of dollars. I love to
>challenge you liberals to go down to the border region in southern AZ
>and just camp for a few nights in the desert and I would bet that your
>bleeding heart would change if you made it out alive. Now be sure and
>hide behind the constitution when the good folks of Iowa try and run
>you out of the State U. after trashing them. This will be fun to watch
>you squirm.

> [REDACTED] Sent from my Droid Charge on Verizon 4G
>LTE

[REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED]
>To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
>Subject: your Atlantic article
>Thread-Topic: your Atlantic article
>Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 20:21:42 -0600
>Accept-Language: en-US
>

>Stephen, I have read your Atlantic article and find it nasty and mean
>spirited. You have trotted out every stereotype of Iowa and Iowans from
>your superior vantage point for the amusement of The Atlantic's
>readers. That is oh, so easy to do but is it balanced? Is it fair? I
>am a New Yorker and have lived in Iowa twice as long as you and this is
>not the state and the people I know. Yes, I live in Iowa City but you
>don't spare Iowa City either. You say that your mission as a journalist
>is to "shine a light into dark corners." We see only the dark corners
>in what you write; we don't see the open mindedness of so many Iowans,
>an openness to others that was my first impression on coming here from
>sixteen years in Massachusetts.
>I wonder what your Oxford subjects would say about their supposedly
>sympathetic interviewer if they read this article.
>[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: your comments

X-MB-Message-Source: WebUI

X-MB-Message-Type: User

From: [REDACTED]

X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 23:15:04 -0500

x-aol-global-disposition: G

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

X-AOL-SCOLL-SCORE: [REDACTED]

X-AOL-SCOLL-URL_COUNT: 0

x-aol-sid: [REDACTED]

All of your comments where right on the money.

Welcome to Iowa!

Now go home!

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

X-Yahoo-Newman-Property: ymail-3

X-Yahoo-Newman-Id: [REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:16:37 -0800

From: [REDACTED]

Reply-To: [REDACTED]

Subject: Your perspective

To: "stephen-g.bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g.bloom@uiowa.edu>

Professor Bloom,

I read your recent article in theatlantic.com, and I must confess that while I was profoundly insulted, all I could think was, what the hell is Red Waldorf cake? And I have lived here for 28 years (take that), and have never met someone with the last name Yoder or Snitker. I also feel that you forgot to mention some positive attributes that characterize Iowa such as: our midwestern work ethic, the neighborly attitude, or the fact that Forbes ranked DM the #1 place for young professionals and the top place to raise a family.

I am sincerely sorry that your experience has been so poor that you feel the need to make all Iowans sound like depressed, misinformed bumpkins. My Iowa experience has been very different, with a safe upbringing, good education, and a great sense of community. I grew up in Steve King country and turned out just fine. I am proud of my state for being one of the most legally progressive states in the nation. I have faith in my fellow Iowans after all we did just fine choosing the last president, didn't we?

Happy holidays!

[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Your story in The Atlantic
Thread-Topic: Your story in The Atlantic
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 11:21:06 -0600
Accept-Language: en-US

Professor Bloom,

My name is [REDACTED] and I'm a reporter at *The Daily Iowan*. I'd just like you to know that I found your story in The Atlantic to be appallingly ignorant. For someone who has worked for a university which preaches the importance of diversity, and the understanding of it, you paint with an awfully wide brush.

I've lived in rural Iowa my entire life, save for the better part of the past 3 1/2 years as a student in Iowa City, and I've encountered very few of the stereotypes you present as fact. Hunters are not typically the bumbling, drunken idiots you portray them to be (I don't even hunt, but there are few other people I know who don't, and none of them get blitzed before heading out.). Iowans also don't routinely kill themselves. Sure, Iowa has a higher suicide rate than New York. New York is consistently among the states with the lowest rate. Iowa is consistently ranked in the mid 30s, nowhere near the top.

I was in your [REDACTED] lecture last fall. From day one, I had you pegged as an arrogant, pretentious ass. It seems as though 95% of what was discussed in that course was YOUR work. Little of it proved to be beneficial, and certainly not enough for the class to be a requirement. If I'm going to be forced to drag myself out of bed bright and early, I have to have one or more of the following conditions be met: 1. I'm being paid for it. 2. It's fun. 3. I'm learning something relevant. And you won the Triple Crown for uselessness: 1. I was paying to take the course. 2. It was boring beyond belief. 3. None of it was relevant for me.

And after reading your latest work, I'm truly grateful for not having learned anything in your class. Because you clearly have no idea what being a journalist is about, and in fact practice many of the proverbial and literal "no-no's." Inaccurate facts, blatantly bending and spinning quotes in such a way they become contradictory to their original meaning and intent, and poor depth of reporting. Did you step outside of the Iowa City area? Names such as Yoder and Schroeder may be very common in places such as Kalona and Amana, but that doesn't make them more common than Garcia or Chen. Seriously, did you honestly expect to find names like those in Mennonite colonies/towns?

If I want to hear a self-important jerk puff out his chest about how great they are (and know all the while they are nowhere near as important as they think they are), all I have to do is turn on MSNBC or FoxNews. And I don't have to get up early to do it.

And, believe it or not, Iowans are actually tolerant of a lot of things. If that's not the experience you had with the people here, and you feel you received somewhat of a cold shoulder, then perhaps you should look in the mirror to find the source of the problem. Because of the many things we are tolerant of, arrogance and elitism are not among them.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>From: [REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 21:04:01 -0600

>Subject:

>To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Ahoj there old professor. Seems like you've caused quite a ruckus on
>the Iowa internets! Hope no one has tried to punch you or put a bag of
>flaming poop on your house yet - many people commenting on newspaper
>articles have threatened ;) it's quite hysterical. I don't necessarily
>agree with all of the stuff you put in your article - maybe I just wish
>you could have pulled out the same old cliches that everyone uses to
>describe rural America/the heartland and left in the real substantive
>commentary/criticism (along with the parts that show you're actually
>fond of your adopted state, which there are many).

>

>Anyway, hope you're enjoying the fallout - I'm sure you are ;)

>

>Take it easy Steve. Let me know the next time you're in Des Moines -

>yep, that's right ... I'm an Iowa native who's stayed in Iowa!

>

>

>--

>[REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 22:43:28 -0600

>Subject:

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>I read your comments again today. If you want to talk about shining a
>light in a dark area, then I think we should shine the light on the
>fact that you took your message outside of Iowa where you knew it would
>get published as if you were an authority figure about Iowa. I live
>and farm in NW Iowa and your description of rural Iowa is ridiculous.
>I've been around the world, living in Pakistan, Morocco and Spain.
>I've been to the deep South, California, New York, Alaska ect. And in
>your article you describe West Virginia, New Orleans, or Alabama, or
>maybe Fort Dodge, but Not Iowa. You inflated small truths to sell
>yourself, and that is what bad reporters do. In reality you told a
>story that you knew would get you noticed, and that was your intent; to
>get your name noticed.
>You did a very poor job of representing Uof IOWA. -- [REDACTED]

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12) Department of Communication Studies University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

>DKIM-Signature:

➤

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar School of Journalism The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject:

X-MB-Message-Source: WebUI

X-MB-Message-Type: User

From: <[REDACTED]>

X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]

Date: Thu, 15 Dec 2011 03:42:54 -0500

x-aol-global-disposition: G

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

X-AOL-SCOLL-SCORE: [REDACTED]

X-AOL-SCOLL-URL_COUNT: 0

x-aol-sid: [REDACTED]

Stephen,

I unfortunately wasted the last 15 minutes of my life reading your misguided, stereotypical column. Why did you chose to stay here in Iowa? Because the U of I pays you 3 times what you're worth to misinform young, impressionable students? You would be better off to never come back and take your family with you. You are the most disliked person in Iowa right now. What a waste of tax dollars paying your 105k salary. By the way; hunting turkeys with rifles is illegal. DEER hunting with SHOTGUNS is what you have been observing for the last 20 years unbeknownst to you.

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)

Department of Communication Studies

University of Michigan

Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar

School of Journalism

The University of Iowa

[REDACTED]

DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

X-UOL-TAGLINE: true

X-UNTD-OriginStamp: [REDACTED]

X-Originating-IP: [REDACTED]

From: "[REDACTED]"

Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 15:46:19 +0000

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject:

X-UNTD-BodySize: 1993

X-ContentStamp: [REDACTED]

X-UNTD-Peer-Info: [REDACTED]

Dr. Mr. Bloom,

After reading your quaint observations in your article "Observations from 20 years of life in Iowa" I'd like to invite you to make your leave from out state permanent. I was born in Colorado but moved to Iowa as an 8 year old. I enjoyed a childhood of being free to roam from sunup to sundown, never having to worry too much about someone stalking or snagging me. I never learned to hunt and the majority of the people I know don't. The ones I know that do would never think to combine alcohol with the sport and hunt to eat what they kill, not just kill things like some of the thugs do in gang riddled cities in this country. Maybe your stellar personality only draws the type of people you seem to think inhabit our state. [REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

>DKIM-Signature: [REDACTED]

>Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 11:15:50 -0600

>Subject:

>From: [REDACTED]

>To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

>

>Professor Bloom,

>

>You, as a professor, were one of the fond memories I took away with me
>from the U of I when I graduated. I enjoyed the class I had with you
>immensely [REDACTED] As did my classmates, I believe. For
>7 years now I've had that fond memory and spoke highly of you if the
>topic of my education and experience in the Journalism school ever came
>up.

>

>It came as a surprise to me last night when a friend called me up and
>asked if I saw the piece you wrote for The Atlantic (he too went
>through the J school). I kept asking "Are you sure it isn't intended as
>tongue-in-cheek?" I had a hard time coming to grips with the possibility
>someone I had admired so much could author such stereotypical musings.

>

>After reading the piece in its entirety, while there was obviously some
>tongue-in-cheek involved, I think overall your intent seems to be to
>generalize Iowans and classify the state as low culture and/or low
>class. It was disappointing, to say the least, to read.

>

>I guess those elevate to those lofty places in our heads are bound
>to inevitably fall from grace. It just sucks when it happens.

>

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

From: "[REDACTED]"
To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject:
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 13:11:39 -0600
Accept-Language: en-US

Professor Bloom- I read your piece on the Atlantic online. I wonder whether a thoughtful article can truly be uniformly negative on a state of 3 million people. I suggest that your article is a mischaracterization of Iowa and Iowans.

Respectfully,

[REDACTED]

Medical Student, University of Iowa

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[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject:
Thread-Index: [REDACTED]
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 18:22:36 +0000
Accept-Language: en-US
x-cr-hashedpuzzle: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
x-cr-puzzleid: [REDACTED]
x-originating-ip: [REDACTED]

I guess you won't be returning to Iowa City.

[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

From: [Perlmutter, David D](#)
To: [Bloom, Stephen G](#)
Subject: Re: don't let the turkeys get you down
Date: Wednesday, December 14, 2011 8:33:11 AM

Thanks for passing those on... Hope they post the comments as well.

--Best wishes,

David D. Perlmutter, Ph.D.
Director of the School of Journalism and Mass Communication
Professor & Starch Faculty Fellow
College of Liberal Arts & Sciences
The University of Iowa

Contact:
E305B Adler Journalism Building
Iowa City, Iowa 52242-2004
P: 319.384.3383
F: 319.335.3502
david-perlmutter@uiowa.edu

[Sent from my iPhone]

On Dec 14, 2011, at 8:15 AM, "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu> wrote:

d,
I appreciate your support during this difficult time. My article in The Atlantic has generated much discussion. I assume you're hearing just one side. Below is a small sampling of the other. s

From: [REDACTED]
To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject:
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:37:31 -0600

Professor Bloom,

I read your article "Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life." Reading a fellow outsider's view of our state was very refreshing. Thanks.

Happy Holidays!

[REDACTED]

Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 07:24:10 -0600
Subject: Re: My take on Iowa
From: [REDACTED]
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

That is a great read Steve -- insightful and thought-provoking with great humor mixed in all of the right places.

[REDACTED]

P.S. My wife and I get the same kind of comments about our beagle, Floyd, when we walk him around the neighborhood. One guy even asked my wife if our dog was fixed because he'd "like to breed him."

Date: Sat, 10 Dec 2011 13:35:40 -0500
From: [REDACTED]
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: Re: My take on Iowa

[REDACTED]

Steve,

Wow. . . that's the Iowa I know from living there just one year. That's the best thing on the state I've ever read, and I read a lot for my book.

I hope the Kevlar duds come in time before the hit squads come to Michigan.

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: My take on Iowa
Date: Sun, 11 Dec 2011 04:54:14 -0500
To: stephen bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Thanks for the memories.

When we lived on the edge of Downtown in Des Moines, [REDACTED]

reminded me we were warned not to go walking behind our house during hunting season. At other times, we had to be alert for bow and arrow sharp shooters out to bag an authorized a wandering deer for an authorized bounty,

You won't need that vest in the UI journalism building. The faculty won't come across your brilliant vivid portrait because it appears in a popular mainstream magazine.

If you ever have to pack up in Iowa City, you can come to Connecticut where the lethal vessels are not bullets, but narrow minded gossip. Of course, our new state isn't without religious bias. One New Yorker who moved here reports she left a few years ago after one more slight. A fellow country club member in Avon remarked to her husband about the new green dress she was wearing.: "Look at the Jew girl all dressed up for Christmas."

■

From: ■

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject:

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:37:31 -0600

Professor Bloom,

I read your article "Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life." Reading a fellow outsider's view of our state was very refreshing. Thanks.

Happy Holidays!

■

From: ■

To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Subject: Stephen--I apologize for Iowans--at least read the bold lines in my email

Thread-Topic: Stephen--I apologize for Iowans--at least read the bold lines in my email

■

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:56:25 -0600

Accept-Language: en-US

Hello Stephen,

First I want to apologize for Iowans who may have threatened you. I am a dental student here at the University and grew up in a small Iowa town my whole life [REDACTED] before coming here. I agree that we have our problems as Iowans but one thing we are is fiercely loyal. Your article is true (for the most part) about rural Iowans but anyone from here, esp us city folk, are going to be upset by that stereotype.

Traveling internationally is one of my favorite things to do in life so I have seen a fair chunk of the world and been to nearly every state. Iowa is a bit hickish in parts and we def have our tractors. Whether good or bad I'll agree your description is fair for, in my estimates, 30% of Iowans. However Iowans are the friendliest people I've seen as they will say hi and bye and smile at everyone, even in Iowa City. We are safe, trusting and generally well educated. I know the backlash you have received based on your article. **Perhaps you could write another article about all the good parts of Iowa you have seen? I'm sure you've seen some of the good Iowa has if nothing else pride in our state haha. It would be a great PR move.**

Just tossing that out as an idea. Now back to studying for my oral maxillofacial surgery class so I can take care of Iowas meth mouth patients :).

Best of luck to you,

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]
To: 'stephen bloom' <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
Subject: RE: My take on Iowa
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 18:58:15 -0600

[REDACTED]

I definitely, totally, enjoyed the article. And you are so correct on everything you printed. (After reading the comments, perhaps my age has something to do with my attitude and approval.) A few things about Iowa surprised me and entertained me. And the Chinese commentary really surprised me.

By the way, what do they hunt in Michigan ??

[REDACTED]

P.S. The comments go on and on and on. To me that verifies a great article. Some interesting reading there.

And, yes, order the EXTRA reinforced Kevlar

[REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
From: [REDACTED]
Subject: RE: 20 years in Iowa
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 19:14:27 -0600

December 14, 2011

[REDACTED]

Re: 20 years in Iowa

Dear Prof. Bloom:

I grew up in Iowa and eventually returned 25 years later (with some sojourns in Iowa City in my twenties and early 30's--**which does not count as living in Iowa**). I can attest to the statement that Iowa is ". . . *political schizophrenic, economically depressed, and culturally challenged*". Every year, my wife and I (she is an [REDACTED] native) have to bug out for [REDACTED] for two months in order to regain our sanity. Of interest, is the fact that we sit on a [REDACTED], 25 miles from [REDACTED], one mile from a meth infested former glory town of [REDACTED] (logging & salmon fishing). However, even the druggies are engaged and aware of the world around them for at least a 400 miles radius. In rural Iowa, that awareness generally extends to a five mile radius.

Most of the comments that I have read highlight Iowa citizen's lack of self regard and self esteem. It extends from rural Iowa to the cities.

Most of the comments highlight the lack of true travel to other geographic areas or cultures. You cannot expand if you travel in a herd

of like minded people.

Most of the comments from former Iowans fail to mention that few will return to their hometowns to settle. Most of these people visit for a week a year. The locals are always careful to be open and welcoming for a few days. However, if that same former Iowan returned to live, life would be very difficult: even in their home town (I was once accused of wearing the wrong farmer hat and "*going the wrong way in a Fareway grocery store*").

I can go on and on. However, I do know that my wife and I moved back to the community that has been home to our family for 155 years and when I didn't do things the "*Iowa Way*", a large cross section of the welcoming community attempted to run us out of town---via threats, ostracism, dirty tricks, and attempted violence. We are still here because the locals were nothing more than stupid bullies with no backbone even when they outnumbered us 5 to 1.

Keep up the good work!

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 20:44:29 -0600

Subject: Inquiry from former student

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Professor Bloom,

My name is [REDACTED] I'm a fresh alumnus of Iowa with degrees in English and Political Science (a minor in Philosophy to top it off).

I'm sorry if the subject is misleading. I've never taken a class from you but I have studied your book in a few of my political science classes.

Today, I read your *Observations From 20 Years of Iowa Life* online. I laughed. I wept. I fumed. I nodded in agreement and in stubborn disbelief.

You should understand why. I may only, if at all, have a few years on your tenure as a 23 year old native in this schizophrenic state. Shudder if you will, but I'm from North-West Central Iowa.

Don't worry, I'm not writing in contest.

With the impression that you're not teaching in this state currently, I still feel the need to buy you coffee/tea/pop in exchange for a brief moment of your time if you're in Iowa City at all these Winter months. Why? To pick your brain a bit about Iowa, your career, and the meaning of life. (Just kidding about the last one, I swear I'm not as pretentious as I sound.)

If it helps or explains my motivation, think of me as an interested student

with a few questions. If it helps, I can re-email you under my still-active University email and pretend I didn't graduate.

I realize your time is marginally more valuable than mine, so I appreciate you taking the time to even read this email.

At the very least, thank you for the frustrating article. I still don't know whether to pack up and move far, far away or proudly rant on a blog about how most Iowans don't like NASCAR and that outsiders just don't understand our temperament.

After all, NASCAR is a Southern thing. Right? Forget the Newton speedway... please...

Yours Truly,
[REDACTED] Iowan

Hi Mr. Bloom,

I read your article in The Atlantic and I want you to know that I really enjoyed it. It was so well-written and definitely captivated the essence of rural Iowa. I've seen on Facebook a lot of students aren't too fond of it (haters) but I want you to know that I really enjoyed it. Let me know if you're ever in town (I assume you'll be doing a lot of TV appearances after this one? jk) But seriously I would love to grab lunch!

All the best,

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(c) [REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 21:41:50 -0600
Subject: friend, not foe
From: Amy Charles <amycharles1@gmail.com>
To: "Bloom, Stephen G" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Hey Steve,

Fuck 'em. And congratulations on having tenure. I made the non-mistake of saying publicly a couple weeks ago that Iowa's not Georgetown (which I'd thought was, you know, obvious and inoffensive) and the shitstorm

that ensued bagged two deans and a couple other high earners, ending in my losing a piddly at-will university post.

They're a little touchy. I see no reason to indulge it much.
Amy

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 20:06:11 -0800

Subject: a nice read

From: [REDACTED]

To: <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Dear Mr. Bloom,

I found my way to your essay in The Atlantic today, through a friend on Facebook who was not pleased with your observations. We went to high school together in [REDACTED] Illinois and she went on to do her undergraduate studies at University of Iowa. She's now in Texas and fuming.

I spent a good hour reading and rereading the essay. I could not figure out what she was so angry about. I read through the comments. I could not figure out what anyone was so angry about. I guess Iowans interpret observations (good ones, I might add) as criticisms, when they clearly aren't. In fact, I saw a lot of fondness for the state in your piece.

[REDACTED] is not too far from the Iowa border, and as my father was a Ryder truck dealer I spent many hours on that road to Keokuk, driving trucks. I haven't been to Keokuk in years, but I imagine it hasn't changed much. I recognized a lot of the details in your piece as being true of where I grew up. I can't think of a single house I went to where we ever used the front door. In fact, the front door to our house, until only recently--for insurance purposes--, did not have steps up to it; the door perched very uselessly about three feet up from the ground. My favorite meal for most of my life was a casserole where the ingredients, in total, were 4 different cans of food. Stir and bake. My grandfather drove his riding lawnmower around town. My family lived in the country, where every summer you got stuck behind tractors. Once, my mother almost had a head on collision with a cow who had escaped the fence. Another time, we drove our 4-wheelers to herd our neighbors cattle off our yard. I remember very clearly ramming into those giant beasts. My parents must not have been worried we would accidentally be trampled.

I commented on my friend's FB link to your article, under all the Iowans' (or temporary ones, who have since moved on) who had posted angry comments. I asked, "Read more carefully. Aren't you seeing his point? How many of us have fled these small towns where we grew up?" No one has responded.

Anyway, this is all just to say that I thoroughly enjoyed your essay and

found the details beautiful in their truth. My only point of contention--I think of the corn as *rustling* in those late summer months. :)

Thank you for writing.
Yours very sincerely,
[REDACTED]

Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 20:59:39 -0800
From: [REDACTED]
Reply-To: [REDACTED]
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

hey stephen! what an article! i'm sure you're being completely bombarded by every tom, dick and harry who wants to, due to the conservative and defensive nature of this state, spit on you. i have to say, and this is coming from a "native", i loved the article and am thankful you were bold enough to write it.

i was home in ames for thanksgiving and was talking with my parents about how sad i thought the state of things were there, how the town had transformed since my childhood (seeing all the local places closed, stores boarded up, and not one, but two walmarts being some of the biggest sadnesses) and they thought i was wrong. so much for progress.

well, i could go on and on, but i wanted to drop you a line and say thanks for writing the hard stuff, hopefully it won't just be chronicled away and it will create a change. either way, you wrote something that made a LOT of people take pause and discuss, the thing all writers dream about.

[REDACTED]

Subject: Re: Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life
From: [REDACTED]
Date: Tue, 13 Dec 2011 23:29:21 -0600
To: "stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu" <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>
I enjoyed the "Observations from 20 Years of Iowa Life" piece that you wrote for the Atlantic. I'm not sure what makes it controversial. Maybe other people need to develop some thicker skin.

From: [REDACTED]
Subject: Re: Sullivan: Real observations from 20 years of Iowa life
Date: Wed, 14 Dec 2011 06:03:05 -0600
To: Stephen Bloom <stephen-g-bloom@uiowa.edu>

Good luck. We hope your colleagues and friends are supportive. In our time, most deserted us--including family.

If not, Iowans have a long memory, but a short attention span. They will want to be "friends" again soon, even though they have done and said egregious things.

Concerning threats: I would not worry too much--most are cowards. However, I hope your children are grown. Iowans like to attack the weak link.

Finally, you have one important advantage: You are smarter than most all of your detractors.

[REDACTED]

*

[REDACTED]

o

Hi Stephen,

I've been reading all of the negative reactions on Facebook to your recent article in The Atlantic and just wanted to let you know I can relate to the backlash you're experiencing.

I've lived in Iowa my entire life and I can understand quite a few of the experiences you mention in the article.

Just wanted to let you know I read the article and found it interesting and well written. It does describe rural Iowa and although it may not be the most positive perspective, it is honest. Unfortunately, it seems that in today's current culture, honesty is often not well received.

However, I feel that is the job of a true journalist and/or artist to present that honest perspective and I feel that in doing so you have upheld that responsibility.

Read your article and had to say kudos to you. Ignore the lash back, it's hard for people to hear the truth about themselves. I'm a native Iowan. I grew up on a farm and I couldn't agree more with what you've said.

It's a comfortable and quaint little world we Iowans live in, and it's those from the outside (or rather those who've come in and lived here from the outside) along with those who see differently, that need to stir up the pot every once in a while to get some things changed. Encouraging work and words.

[REDACTED]

From: [REDACTED]

Date: December 13, 2011 4:37:46 PM EST

To: <sgbloom@umich.edu>

Subject: LOVE IT!!

Professor - I love your Atlantic article. I'm a former Iowan, born and bred, that went to the U of IA and got out of town immediately after graduating. I would go one step further and say Iowa is a cesspool of passive aggressiveness like no place in the world. I've traveled to 50 countries and all major U.S. cities and never met a more truly negative and self-loathing group of people.

Anyway, I'm sure you're in for a torrent of hate mail and I'll bet Mitt Romney \$10,000.00 (that's a joke) there will be a call for your resignation. I'll go one step further again and bet you are now off Terry Branstad's "Holiday" card list. Regardless, when they try to filet you I'll be there to point out the nonsense of this and back you up 100%. Iowa needs more people like you and they'll probably try to drive you out of town. Hold firm.

[REDACTED]

T: [REDACTED]

M: [REDACTED]

E: [REDACTED]

Subject: Terrific piece in the Atlantic
From: Jay Christensen Add contact
To: sgbloom@umich.edu Add contact
Date: Tue 12:51 am

Hi Stephen,

Hope you are doing well.

Just finished your piece in the Atlantic. Really enjoyed it. Brought back a lot of memories.

Best,
Jay Christensen

--

Stephen G. Bloom

Howard R. Marsh Visiting Professor (2011 - 12)
Department of Communication Studies
University of Michigan
Professor and Bessie Dutton Murray Professional Scholar
School of Journalism
The University of Iowa